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THE FAITH OF ST. PAUL

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THE FAITH OF ST. PAUL

A STUDY OF ST. PAUL AS THE INTERPRETER OF JESUS

BY

D. M. ROSS, D.D.

AUTHOR OF "THE TEACHING OF JESUS,"
"THE CHRIST OF FAITH AND THE JESUS OF HISTORY," ETC.

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PREFACE

For now more than a generation a noteworthy feature of Christian thought has been the growth of a conviction that the current interpretation of Christianity has in not a few directions lost effective touch with the religious and ethical ideals of the historical Jesus. In these last years, when the problem of the part to be played by the Christian Church in the reconstruction of society has been forcing many members of the Church to consider afresh the possibility of the need of reconstruction with respect to some of its own ideals and activities, the cry, Back to Jesus, has been urged with an ever-increasing insistence.

There is a widespread idea that the way to a return to the regnant ideals of Jesus is blocked by Paul and what Paul is supposed to stand for. Loyalty to Paul, it is said, involves an engrossment with theological dogmas which issues in the depreciation of the emphasis laid by Jesus upon that goodness of heart and life without which no real reconstruction of society is possible. Loyalty to Paul, it is further said, involves the acceptance of doctrines about predestination, the atonement, and similar

subjects, which are not in keeping with the teaching of Jesus about the fatherly love of God with which His religious and ethical ideals are inextricably bound up. So the cry is raised, Back to Jesus from Paul.

This volume represents an attitude to Paul which is radically different. Its motto might be: Back to Jesus *with* Paul. It is based on the belief that Paul is our best interpreter of Jesus, our most faithful and fruitful expositor of the teaching of Jesus on the wideness and strength of God's fatherly love, on the good heart as the secret of true life, on the supremacy of love and on the brotherhood of humanity. In the exposition of this theme I have once and again had occasion to indicate that Paul has been saddled with responsibility for interpretations of Christianity which are at odds with his dominant convictions. Too often has he been wounded even in the house of his friends.

On the last page of his volume on St Paul, Renan, comparing Paul with Jesus, made this pronouncement: "In our day we see the reign of Paul coming to an end; Jesus, on the contrary, is more living than ever." There is truth in what Matthew Arnold, in his essay on "St Paul and Protestantism" (still well worth reading), said in reply: "The reign of the real St Paul is only beginning." It is precisely Paul—the real Paul—we need for a juster and more helpful interpretation of Jesus and of his significance for the modern world. We have special

need to-day of his interpretation of the teaching of Jesus about the Kingdom of God. In these days of strife between class and class, nation and nation, what Paul has to say about the New Humanity, of which Jesus is the leader and inspirer, is a singularly modern message, as cogent as it is illumining, for all who are perplexed with our industrial, social, and international problems.

In a volume published two years ago under the title, *The Christ of Faith and the Jesus of History*, I dealt with the regnant ideals of Jesus and the place which should be given to these ideals in the interpretation of Christianity. To avoid unnecessary repetition I have at several points referred the readers of this volume to what I have written there.

Quotations from the epistles of Paul have usually been given in the rendering of the Revised Version (including the margin), occasionally in that of Professor Moffatt, and once or twice in that of Dr W. Gunion Rutherford.

For many valuable suggestions I am greatly indebted to Professor W. R. Sorley, who read the manuscript, and to Principal Alexander Martin, who has read the proofs.

Crieff, *September* 1923.

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I

INTRODUCTION

THE FAITH OF ST. PAUL

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

In turning from the Synoptic Gospels to the epistles of Paul we find ourselves in a somewhat different atmosphere. To many people it seems not only a less congenial atmosphere, but in some respects even a forbidding atmosphere. The teaching of Jesus is profound, but it is lucid and universally intelligible. He expresses His thought "in the speech in which a mother speaks to her child." The simplicity and attractiveness of His sayings appeal to the learned and unlearned alike. In Paul's epistles, on the other hand, there are words and phrases and turns of thought which may be intelligible to the learned, but which bewilder rather than enlighten the ordinary reader. For example, the fatherly love of God is one of the regnant thoughts of Jesus, and His expression of it in the parable of the Prodigal Son is so luminous, so self-evidencing, that its appeal is direct and universal. But if the fatherly love of God is what Paul means to set forth in his doctrine

of justification by faith, the arguments he makes use of are so complicated, so difficult to understand, that the luminous message of Jesus seems to be only obscured. Another stumbling-block is the apparent want of accord between the emphasis which Jesus lays upon goodness of life and Paul's engrossment with theological doctrines. It is recognised, of course, that Paul not infrequently insists upon Christian duty, but his ethical teaching seems to occupy a secondary place. It is Paul, it is true, who says: "If I . . . know all mysteries and all knowledge . . . but have not love, I am nothing" (1 Cor. 13^2). The whole chapter, indeed, in which that statement is made takes one into the atmosphere of the Sermon on the Mount. But the sudden emergence of such a passage in a Pauline epistle is an enigma; it seems to be out of harmony with Paulinism, to belong to a different world from that in which Paul usually moves. It does not suffice to allay the suspicion that he does not put the same emphasis as Jesus upon goodness of life.

This suspicion may be deepened for the ordinary reader of the epistles, if he becomes acquainted with the books and magazine articles of theologians and scholars who have made a study of Paul and Paulinism. Here the thirteenth chapter of First Corinthians and similar passages, of which there are many, are often not in the foreground. It is theological topics which are chiefly discussed, and sometimes topics about which Jesus is silent, such as the origin of sin and

physical death, and the relation of the sovereignty of God to the free will of man. And in the discussion of theological topics, the differences of opinion as to the interpretation of Paul's words are so perplexing as to confirm the layman in his longing to get back from Paul to Jesus.

This longing will be further confirmed if he has made acquaintance with what some modern scholars have said as to Paul's lack of interest in the life and teaching of the historical Jesus. Paul, it is argued, was concerned only with two facts in the career of Jesus—His death and His resurrection. What Jesus was as a man amongst men, what He did, what He taught, had no particular interest for Paul. Such a story of His life as we have in our Synoptic Gospels was no factor in the sudden revolution by which the persecutor of the Christians became the servant and apostle of their Master, nor was it a vital factor in his interpretation of the Christian religion. Before his conversion, it is said, he had little knowledge of the life and teaching of Jesus. He had, however, the conception of a "heavenly Christ," a "celestial Son of God"—an imaginative figure with which he had become familiar, in common with other Jews, through the popular apocalyptic literature of that age, especially the Similitudes of the Book of Enoch. It was a vision of this "heavenly Christ," not of Jesus of Nazareth, which came to him on the road to Damascus. The superhuman attributes of this "heavenly Christ" he transferred

to Jesus who had died upon the Cross at Jerusalem.[1] The death of Jesus, followed by the resurrection which testified to God's acceptance of it, was the one and only decisive fact in His whole life. By His death Jesus had so endured the penal consequences of the sins of His fellows as to make it possible for God's forgiving love to come into effective operation; or in some other way Jesus by His death had made it possible for God to inaugurate a new departure in His dealings with the human race. "The moral majesty of Jesus, His purity and piety, His life among the people, His teaching"—all that has no significance here. It has no significance for salvation. "To believe in these divine deeds—the incarnation, death, and resurrection—of a Heavenly Being, that is to be saved." [2]

If such a view of Paul's interpretation of the significance of Jesus had any semblance of justification from his writings, then indeed there would be ample ground for the cry: Back to Jesus from Paul.

From various quarters we are met with the suggestion that there is a serious divergence between Paul and Jesus. There are, of course, differences which everyone recognises, but what is suggested

[1] It is not explained how Paul came to connect this "heavenly Christ" with Jesus. Why did he not rather connect the "heavenly Christ" with some outstanding antagonist of Jesus and His followers?

[2] Wrede, *Paulus*, pp. 55, 94.

is that the divergence is so radical that Paul cannot be accepted as a faithful interpreter of the mind of Jesus. This suggestion raises several questions which demand careful consideration. As to Paul's alleged excessive engrossment with theological doctrine, questions such as these have to be considered: What engrosses Paul most—Christ-inspired experience or the expression of doctrines to which this experience may give rise? If there has been often manifested in the Christian centuries a tendency to lay greater emphasis on assent to doctrines about the Person of Christ than on loyalty to the religious and ethical ideals of Jesus, is Paul justly to be held responsible for this tendency? Behind these and similar questions about Paul's relation to theological doctrine, there are questions such as these to be considered: Had Paul little interest in anything in the life and teaching of Jesus except in His incarnation, death, and resurrection? If what Jesus was, what He did, and what He taught meant little or nothing to him, can it be intelligibly explained how he ever came to be a Christian, or how he came to be dominated and inspired by the religious and ethical ideals which we find in his epistles?

The consideration of these various questions will help us to decide whether Paul is, as has been alleged, "the second founder of Christianity," [1] or is "the most important continuator of the work of

[1] "This second founder of the Christian religion, in comparison

Jesus."[1] We may find valid reasons for concluding that, in spite of many things in his epistles which seem at first sight to point in a contrary direction, Paul is of all the followers of Jesus His best interpreter; that for the cry: "Back to Jesus *from* Paul," it were better to substitute this other: "Back to Jesus *with* Paul."

There are two assumptions which it is natural for the ordinary reader of the Pauline epistles to make regarding Paul's own conception of his relation to Jesus.

In the first place, it is natural to assume that Paul himself believed that he owed his standing as a Christian to Jesus, and to the same Jesus whom his fellow-Christians acknowledged as their Lord. If this belief of his had been an illusion, if his Christ had been merely the Christ of apocalyptic fancy, it is difficult to understand how he could have been welcomed into their fellowship by the members of the Christian community. They, at least, were interested, and interested intensely, in the life and teaching of the historical Jesus. What, then, must have been their attitude to a convert to whom all that meant little or nothing, and whose interest was centred in a heavenly Christ, related only through His death and resurrection to the Master in the

with the first, has without doubt exercised on the whole a stronger, not a better influence."—Wrede, *Paulus*, p. 104.

[1] P. Wendland, *Die Hellenistisch-Römische Kultur*, p. 242.

atmosphere of whose life and teaching their whole Christian life was lived ?

In the second place, it is natural to assume that Paul himself believed that in the message he delivered he was interpreting the mind of Jesus. If this belief of his had been an illusion, would there not have been more serious ground for difference between him and the original apostles than any that emerged in connection with the relation of Gentile converts to the Jewish Law ?

These two assumptions are dealt with in the two parts of this volume. Part I. deals with the dependence of Paul upon Jesus, and Part II. with Paul as the interpreter of Jesus.

In Part I. an attempt is made to show that the sudden revolution in Paul's career and the spiritual experience involved in that sudden revolution are inexplicable if he had little knowledge of, or little interest in, the life and teaching of Jesus of Nazareth. Here we have to take account of the environment in which his early years were spent ; of his spiritual outlook in that environment ; of his own account in the seventh chapter of Romans of the unrest in his heart amid all his zeal for the traditions of his fathers ; and of his opportunities of learning about the life and teaching of the Jesus whose followers he was bent on crushing out of existence.

In Part II. the interpretation by Paul of the regnant ideals of Jesus is the main subject of consideration. As Paul is so often charged with magni-

fying the importance of theological doctrine at the expense of ethical interests, special attention is given at the outset to his teaching on goodness as man's sovereign interest, and on goodness not as the observance of rules but as the outcome of the spirit of life in Christ Jesus. This aspect of his teaching is considered first for an additional reason: in what he has to say about the grace of God and about God in Christ, it is with God as He reveals Himself in ethical experience he is chiefly concerned. In the two concluding chapters we deal with the way in which Paul applies the new conceptions of goodness and God, which he owes to Jesus, to his outlook upon the world and to his interpretation of human history.

We shall find that the phraseology of Paul is often different from that of Jesus. He speaks of the spirit, where Jesus speaks of the good heart; he speaks of the grace of God, where Jesus speaks of the love of God; he speaks of the New Humanity, where Jesus speaks of the Kingdom of God. But he is never visited by a doubt that on the great themes in which his interest is centred he may be misinterpreting his Master. That he expresses his thoughts in his own way suggests how fully he has assimilated the message of Jesus. He who clings most closely to the very words of Jesus is not necessarily the most faithful interpreter of the mind of Jesus.

The big things in Paul, the things about which he

speaks with a glow of enthusiasm, reflected again and again in a certain lyrical, or at least rhythmical, form of expression—these things he is never weary of acknowledging that he owes to Jesus. But there are other things in his writings for which he would make no such claim.

He owed much to the Jewish religion, as Jesus Himself did. His unsparing polemic against the Law suggested to some early Christians, like Marcion in the second century, that he was minded to have done with the Jewish religion. That is an unjustified inference. He never ceases as a Christian to be thankful for having been born a Jew, and for having been nurtured in the religious atmosphere of the synagogue. There was far more in Judaism than Law as interpreted by the scribes. There was the story of Abraham and the fathers, the messages of the prophets, the aspirations of the Psalmists, and the promise of the advent of the Christ of God and of a new and better age. "What advantage, then, hath the Jew?" asked Paul. "Much every way" was his answer. The whole history of the people of Israel was leading up to, and preparing the way for, the advent of Jesus, and one of Paul's names for the New Humanity of which Jesus is the inaugurator and leader is "the Israel of God."

At the same time it has to be noted that if he served himself heir to what was best in the religion of Israel, he also carried with him into his Christian years much that he had learned in the schools of the

rabbis. To take but one illustration. In his method of handling the Scriptures of the Old Testament, in his reading into biblical texts a different meaning from that of the original writer, in his allegorising interpretation of biblical texts, it is the voice of the pupil of Gamaliel we are listening to.

Then Paul owes something to his knowledge of the thought-world of the Gentiles. Not indeed for the substance of his message, but, in several instances, for the particular form in which he gives expression to it. There were Jews of his time, such as Philo of Alexandria, who sought to amalgamate the religious philosophy of the Greeks with their Jewish faith. Such an enterprise did not appeal to Paul. He was not drawn towards metaphysical speculations about the mysteries of the Godhead in itself and about the relation of God, conceived as essentially the Infinite, to the finite world. He was here a true Jew. God was to him no mere Infinite, but Righteous Will working out a gracious purpose in the world and human history. Both as a Pharisee and as a Christian his interest was centred not in metaphysical but in moral problems. How can I be a good man ?—that question never ceased to be paramount. It was therefore natural that what chiefly attracted him in the thought-world of the Gentiles was the ethical teaching of the Stoics.[1]

[1] One result of recent investigations into the mystery religions which had a wide vogue in Paul's day has been the attempt to find here the origin of some of Paul's characteristic thoughts. These

Introduction

For the purpose we have in view in this study of St Paul our first-hand material consists almost entirely of his own letters.[1] These letters are not tractates thrown into an epistolary form. It is quite certain that they were not written with a view to their use by subsequent generations of Christians: such an idea could not have occurred to Paul, for he cherished the hope of the Parousia (presence or coming) of Christ taking place in his own lifetime, or, if not so soon, at least in the immediate future. They were written solely with a view to the existing Christian communities in which he was specially interested. Not only so, but they were written to these communities not to expound some general theme, but to hearten his readers in some particular difficult position in which they were placed at the moment, or to deal with

investigations have been of real value in throwing light upon the religious atmosphere of the Græco-Roman world at the beginning of the Christian era, and upon some of the "developments" of the Christian religion in later times, but the more I have read of the literature on the subject, the stronger has become my conviction that these investigations are of little, if any, value in throwing light upon Paul's Christian message. Probably enough his knowledge of the mystery religions may explain two or three of the phrases he uses in the description of Christian experience, but the origin of the Christian experience itself must be sought elsewhere.

[1] 1 and 2 Thessalonians, Galatians, 1 and 2 Corinthians, Romans, Colossians, Philemon, and Philippians are accepted by a large number of experts in New Testament scholarship as of direct Pauline authorship. As doubts are expressed by several scholars in regard to Ephesians, I have not drawn upon it except in illustration of what is vouched for by other epistles.

some particular grave peril which was threatening to work mischief in the Christian community. That is, they were written with the definite and limited purpose of helping the readers in a definite situation. For example, the Christian community at Corinth had written a letter to Paul, asking his advice upon several matters which had given rise to discussion among themselves. "Now concerning the things whereof ye wrote" (1 Cor. 7^1). He had also received disturbing reports of what was going on in the Christian community. "For it hath been signified unto me concerning you, my brethren, by them which are of the household of Chloe, that there are contentions among you" (1 Cor. 1^{11}). It was therefore with a particular set of circumstances in view that he wrote the first epistle to the Corinthians.

In letters written expressly to deal with difficulties which had emerged in these early Christian communities, it is natural to find questions discussed which in themselves have lost interest for the modern world. For example, Paul devotes a whole chapter and more to the question whether it is lawful for a Christian to eat flesh which, before it was sent to the market, had been offered in sacrifice at the altar of one of the gods worshipped by the Gentiles. The question in itself is dead, but not the principle on which Paul deals with it—that a Christian, inspired by the spirit of Christ, has to ask not merely what is lawful for himself, but also what is demanded by a loving regard for the highest interests of others.

All through his letters it is because he comes into close touch with the daily life of the Christian community that he has occasion to disclose how he interprets what is meant by "the spirit of life in Christ Jesus."

Such disclosures are the big things in Paul's letters. But they are made in connection with the discussion of particular questions, the due understanding of which demands knowledge of the kind of world in which Paul and his readers moved, and the exercise of imagination in reconstructing what was in the mind of the people to whom he wrote his letters and what was in Paul's mind when he wrote them. Here immense service has been rendered by the work of New Testament scholars, and especially by the work of New Testament scholars of the last eighty years.

Paul's letters give us only a few illustrations of the way in which he must constantly have been dealing with the problem of bringing the power of the spirit of Christ to bear upon the whole round of the Christian life. We could wish that we had further illustrations. We could wish that Silas or Timothy had left us notes of his spoken addresses or of his table-talk. We could wish especially that Paul had left us an autobiography. By a mere accident he has left us a few fragments of autobiography, which give us such an insight into the inner life of the apostle who laboured more abundantly than any other that we would fain have had more. That

we have even these few fragments is due to the persistence with which certain Judaising Christians challenged his claim to be an apostle of Christ and spread abroad in the Christian communities he had founded calumnious reports about the unworthy motives by which his work as an apostle was inspired. *Felix culpa!* To check the mischief which these opponents of his might do in his beloved churches, he had, however unwillingly, to lay bare the secrets of his inner life. We are taken into the very heart of Paul. Especially do we learn of his passionate longing to share in the strength of the life of Christ by sharing in the sufferings of Christ. Here, as elsewhere, the big things in Paul's letters are the outbreakings of the spirit of Christ, and for everyone to whom Christianity is first and foremost the revelation of spirit and life these letters are a mine of extraordinary richness.

II

THE DEPENDENCE OF PAUL UPON JESUS

CHAPTER II

PAUL'S SPIRITUAL OUTLOOK IN HIS EARLY YEARS

To understand Paul the Christian we need to know something of his spiritual history before there occurred that decisive break in his life which we speak of as his conversion. The more we know of what he was seeking after in those early years and of his experience of struggle and failure in the quest, the better shall we be able to appreciate what that great hour meant for him when it was the good pleasure of God to reveal His Son in him. In looking back at a later stage upon the whole course of his life he recognised that "from his very birth" (Gal. 1^{15}) God had been behind his life, controlling and shaping it for all that was to happen in the future. And it is not only for his initial experience as a Christian that a knowledge of his early spiritual history is important, but also for an understanding of the special form in which, in his epistles, he has given expression to his Christian experience. Every reader of his epistles confesses with the author of the "Second Epistle of St Peter" that he finds there "things hard to be understood," but on not a few of these "hard things" light is shed by his early spiritual

history. There was indeed a decisive break in his life when it was the good pleasure of God to reveal His Son in him. There was also an intelligible continuity in his whole life. His days as a Pharisee and his days as a Christian were "bound each to each."

For a knowledge of his early spiritual outlook it will suffice for our present purpose to take account of two special factors in his environment by which he was powerfully influenced: (1) the synagogue, and (2) contact with the Gentile world.

1. The Synagogue

The temple with its worship and its priests has a prominent place in the Old Testament, but not so the synagogue. We have no account there of its institution, no regulations for the appointment of its office-bearers or for the conduct of its meetings. If we except one or two references in the later Psalms, the Old Testament knows nothing of the synagogue.

In the New Testament, on the other hand, we find that the synagogue is not only a well-known established institution, but seems to have a larger place in the life of the Jewish people than the temple itself.

The origin of this new institution is to be sought in the new conditions in which Jews found themselves in consequence of the Babylonian exile. The Jews who had been deported from their homeland in Palestine to Babylonia must have devised some

means of meeting together for common worship, that they might hearten each other in loyalty to their ancestral faith. But not much is known of these assemblies of the Jews of the Dispersion in Babylonia, or of their influence on the development of the synagogue as we meet with it in the third century B.C. From the third century onwards the Dispersion of the Jews assumed a somewhat new character as compared with that which we associate with the Babylonian exile. The successors of Alexander the Great, carrying out the policy of Alexander himself, encouraged the settlement of Jews in other lands than Mesopotamia—in those Eastern lands, such as Egypt, Syria, and Asia Minor, where the Greek language and Greek civilisation were gaining an increasing hold upon the people. By the beginning of the Christian era the Jews of the Dispersion far outnumbered those of the homeland. Communities of Jews were to be found in all the countries bordering on the Mediterranean Sea.[1]

This widespread and increasing Dispersion of the Jews was the occasion for the development of the synagogue. In the land of their exile, wherever that might be, they drew close to one another. The strongest bond of union was their Jewish faith, which became only the dearer to them in the religious and moral environment of the Gentile city in which

[1] In the map in Deissmann's *Paulus*, 143 places are marked where it is known that Jewish communities were established at an early period.

they carried on their trade or handicraft. They erected a building, modest but often dignified, to be their meeting-place for a religious service on the Sabbath and other days, and to serve as a school for their children. Through the fellowship of the synagogue they heartened each other in devotion to the God of their fathers—the one and only God who was essentially Righteous Will—and in loyalty to the high ethical ideals of which they were the heirs. Further, through the fellowship of the synagogue they stimulated each other to have a jealous regard for the preservation of national customs—such as circumcision, the keeping of the seventh day as a day of rest, the avoidance of certain kinds of food—by which they could keep alive the sense of their distinctive nationality, and so ward off the danger of their becoming merged in the national life of the country in which they were settled.

It was the synagogue which enabled the Jews to maintain their distinctive Jewish life in the atmosphere of Gentile civilisation. It was therefore natural that with Jews seriously interested in their Jewish faith the synagogue should have been an immensely popular institution. So popular was it, that it became a securely established institution even in Palestine, where it was less needed than in the Gentile cities where the Jews of the Dispersion had made their home.[1]

Though the spiritual life of the Jews of the Dis-

[1] The fact that the synagogue offered to the people of Palestine

persion was associated chiefly with the synagogue, the temple at Jerusalem had its own share of their reverent esteem. It was a common centre in which the many synagogues of the Dispersion had a bond of union. The Jews of the Dispersion sent a yearly contribution of money to the temple, and cherished a longing, often gratified, to make a pilgrimage to Jerusalem and take part in one or other of the religious festivals. But though the temple did not cease to make its appeal to the patriotic and religious instincts of the Jews of the Dispersion, the synagogue exercised a stronger influence on their spiritual life. In New Testament times the temple was no longer what it had been to the Jews from the fifth to the second century B.C.; that is, from the time of Ezra to that of the Maccabees. From the middle of the second century the temple was losing ground in the esteem of the majority of the Jewish people, in consequence of its close association with the Sadducees, who had little sympathy with the more earnest religious aspects of Judaism. What was lost to the temple was gained by the synagogue. So dominating became the influence of the synagogue that when the temple and the worship of which the temple was the centre came to an end after the capture and destruction of Jerusalem by Titus 70 A.D., Judaism preserved its vitality with an effectiveness which would have been impossible if there had not

living at a distance from Jerusalem a meeting-place for common worship must have tended to increase its popularity.

been in existence an institution other than the temple.

What this important institution stood for claims further consideration.

The synagogue was in many respects widely different from the temple. The centre of the religious service in the temple was sacrificial worship; the synagogue concentrated on this question: How are we to know what the good and God-pleasing life is, and how are we to live out this life? In the temple the chief officials were priests charged with the duty of attending to the proper offering of the sacrifices; in the synagogue there were no priests and no officials corresponding to priests. In the temple the conduct of the religious service was in the hands of an official class; in the synagogue there was a wide freedom to make use of the gifts of any of its members. In the temple the institution was the chief thing; the synagogue tended to emphasise the responsibility of every individual for living out the good and God-pleasing life.

The centre of the religious service in the synagogue was the reading of a portion of the Pentateuch—the five books of Moses—and of the Pentateuch treated chiefly as a law-book, in which were to be found divine directions for a good and God-pleasing life. Other parts of the sacred Scriptures were read, but not in the same systematic way. To us it seems strange that in comparison with the Pentateuch the writings of the prophets should have been assigned

a secondary place. But when we bear in mind that the fundamental idea governing the service was to obtain knowledge of definite precepts about the good and God-pleasing life, and to foster loyalty to the divine Law, the primacy assigned to the Pentateuch is intelligible enough.

Emphasis was laid upon obedience to the Law in the whole round of daily life, and to the Law as the expression of the will of God. For right conduct was rooted in religion. At the beginning of the service there was a recital of the Shemah—consisting of Deuteronomy 6^{4-9}, 11^{13-21}, and Numbers 15^{37-41}—in which are included verses such as these: "Hear, O Israel: the Lord our God is one Lord: and thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thine heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy might. And these words, which I command thee this day, shall be in thine heart: and thou shalt teach them diligently unto thy children, and shalt talk of them when thou sittest in thine house, and when thou walkest by the way, and when thou liest down, and when thou risest up . . . I am the Lord your God, which brought you out of the land of Egypt, to be your God: I am the Lord your God."

A fixed form of prayer was also part of the service—the Shemoneh Esreh, substantially the same prayer as is in use in the synagogue to-day—in which we find sentences such as these: "Blessed art Thou, O Lord, our God and the God of our fathers . . . who bestowest gracious favours and createst all

things. . . . Thou art mighty for ever, O Lord; Thou restorest life to the dead, Thou art mighty to save . . . supporting the fallen and healing the sick, and setting at liberty those who are bound, and upholding Thy faithfulness unto those who sleep in the dust . . . Cause us to turn, O our Father, to Thy law, and draw us near, O our King, to Thy service, and restore us in perfect repentance to Thy presence. . . . Forgive us, our Father, for we have sinned; pardon us, our King, for we have transgressed; ready to pardon and forgive art Thou. . . . Reign over us, Thou Lord alone in grace and mercy; and justify us. Blessed art Thou, O Lord the King, for Thou lovest righteousness and justice. . . . We praise Thee, for Thou art the Lord our God and the God of our fathers for ever and ever; the Rock of our life, the Shield of our salvation, Thou art for ever and ever. . . . Thou art good, for Thy mercies fail not, and compassionate, for Thy loving-kindness never ceaseth; our hopes are for ever in Thee."

Provision was made in the service for what corresponds to preaching in the Christian church. In connection with the reading of a passage from the Pentateuch or of a passage from other parts of Scripture an opportunity was given for an address, not from an official preacher, for there was no such functionary in the synagogue, but from any competent person who happened to be present and to be approved by the ruler of the synagogue, whose business it was to arrange who should read the

scriptures and the prayers and who should give the address.

The service in the synagogue was in some respects not unlike that which we find in many a Christian church. But there was one fundamental difference. The religious service in every Christian church has its centre explicitly or implicitly in Jesus Christ. In the synagogue the centre of the service was the Law. The confession of faith in the Shemah bore directly upon the observance of the Law. The Pentateuch, to which chief attention was given, was valued chiefly as a law-book, and other parts of the Scriptures were specially valued for their bearing on the observance of the Law. There was a place in the service for recalling the great story of the people of Israel, and for delivering addresses upon incidents in this story; there was also a place for the expression of religious aspiration in a common confession and in common prayer, but through the whole service the Law was the dominant factor.

This close connection of morality with religion was a noteworthy feature of the Jewish faith as represented by the synagogue—all the more worthy of special notice, when we consider how loose was the connection between these two interests in the Gentile world. Nor is this the only feature of the religion of the synagogue which deserves to be held in high esteem. In many other directions Christianity is the debtor of the synagogue. But the debt is not always sufficiently acknowledged, or even recognised.

But while we have due regard to all this, we ought not to shut our eyes to the dangers involved both for morality and religion in concentration upon the Law, as seen in the Judaism of Paul's day. Emphasis upon obedience to the Law as a system of statutory precepts might have injurious effects upon the conception of morality. There were of course noble ethical precepts in the Jewish law-book, but alongside of these there were precepts of another kind. There were many precepts dealing with civil rights, that is, precepts which we consider to belong to the sphere of civil law; and as the Roman government allowed the Jewish communities to put in force several of these precepts amongst their own members, the way was prepared for the Jews coming to regard the Law in general less as the setting forth of ethical ideals than as the promulgation of statutes which could be duly observed by external obedience. The more this way of regarding the Law gained ground, the greater was the need for determining how statutory precepts were to be applied in detail, and how they were to be interpreted to meet changing circumstances. So, by way of developing what, it was believed, was implied in the written Law, there came into existence an ever-increasing number of "decisions" which were formulated by the scribes, or lawyers as they are sometimes appropriately spoken of in the New Testament, who had their headquarters in Jerusalem. These decisions—"the traditions of the

elders"—were not yet committed to writing in New Testament times, but were handed on by oral teaching from one generation of scribes to another. There was one direction in which the scribes showed conspicuous zeal. Many of the precepts of the written Law were concerned with what Gentiles would have regarded not as ethical ideals but as merely national customs, and these precepts were especially developed by the scribes, with the laudable intention of making more efficient the "hedge" against the invasion into Judaism of the malign influence of the Gentile world.

In the Law, then, there was an elaborate system of directions for living a good and God-pleasing life, which were very varied in character. Some of them were the expression of ethical ideals, some of them were statutes such as we find in a civil code, and others had reference to religious ceremonies and national customs. In the Law itself a distinction was not drawn between these various kinds of directions. All the directions, including those which were formulated in "the traditions of the elders," were regarded as the authoritative revelation of the will of God.

The way was thus paved for the growth of legalism in the sphere of morality. There was an inevitable tendency to interpret the good and God-pleasing life in terms of obedience to statutory precepts. But to lay stress on mere external obedience, even to a moral precept, is to distort the very meaning of

goodness. "Good works" may be achieved along such a line, but not goodness. For true goodness must have its root in the inner life of a man; it must be the fruit of a good heart. On this distinction between "good works" and true goodness the Judaism of the scribes could not afford to lay a marked emphasis. For if people were encouraged, in determining what was good and God-pleasing, to give a large place to the dictates of their own heart and conscience, individuals might begin to question the divine authoritativeness of one and another of the multitudinous precepts of the Law.

Legalism in religion is the natural accompaniment of legalism in morality. If the good and God-pleasing life is interpreted as obedience to statutory precepts, there is an inevitable tendency to conceive of God as a Legislator and Judge. Where God is so conceived, the core of true religion, man's direct fellowship with God, is pushed into the background. This was what religion meant to the best of the leaders and teachers of Israel. But in the Judaism of later times less emphasis was laid upon the direct fellowship of the individual soul with God. To the prophet there succeeded the scribe, and to the scribe there seemed to be danger in the re-emergence of the prophetic spirit. A fresh spiritual message, springing from an experience of direct fellowship with God, might act as a revolutionary force and affect the accepted religious system in disastrous ways.

But, however injurious may have been the influence of legalism in the later Judaism, concentration upon the Law must be credited with a notably wholesome influence upon the Jewish people. It taught them to regard righteousness as man's primary interest, and to associate religion in the closest way with their daily duty; it fostered their sense of individual responsibility to God for what they made of their life; and by a severe, if sometimes misdirected, discipline it strengthened their moral fibre. It revealed "an energy fraught with the promise of great things." [1]

It was in the atmosphere of the Judaism of the synagogue that Paul's early years were passed. He knew about the temple and its sacrificial worship, and had a reverent esteem for the Holy City as the venerable hearth of his ancestral faith and as the common centre for all the Jews of the Dispersion. It was not, however, the temple with its sacrificial worship which shaped his early spiritual history: in his epistles there is a singular absence of reference to anything connected with the temple at Jerusalem. He was out and out a synagogue Jew. As a Christian he cherished a lively sense of what he owed to Judaism—his knowledge of the sacred Scriptures ("the oracles"), of God's intimate relations with Israel ("the adoption"), of the divine law, of the story of the fathers, of the promises of a brighter

[1] Kuenen, *Hibbert Lectures*, p. 210.

future for the Jews (Rom. 3^2, $9^{4,5}$), and these were precisely the features of Judaism which were specially associated with the synagogue.

Of his attitude to the Law as laid down in the Law and developed by the scribes we have his own account. "I advanced in the Jews' religion beyond many of mine own age among my countrymen, being more exceedingly zealous for the traditions of my fathers" (Gal. 1^{14}). He had taken it to heart with exceptional seriousness that a good and God-pleasing life must be his supreme interest, and that such a life involved not merely loyalty to the ethical ideals of the Law, but also obedience to the multitudinous traditions of the fathers. These traditions were the commandments of God just as much as the ethical precepts, and, if he failed in scrupulously observing them, there was no possibility of realising his ideal of what a good and God-pleasing life should be.

It was natural that Paul should ally himself with the Pharisees, who had been the leaders of the stricter Jews from the middle of the second century B.C., and who had a predominating influence in the synagogue, as the Sadducees had in the temple. They were not officials; they were a religious party, whose bond of union was a resolute zeal for safeguarding the Jewish faith against the Sadducees and other Jews who were disposed to make compromises with Gentile civilisation. With that end in view they were whole-heartedly in favour of the development of the written Law by means of de-

cisions formulated by the scribes in the oral law, and ever being increased in number.

So intense was Paul's sympathy with the religious aims of the Pharisees that it was his ambition to qualify himself at Jerusalem to be a scribe (lawyer) (Acts 22[3]). His official position as a scribe would enable him to do more effective service in securing the obedience of the Jews to the traditions of the elders as well as to the written Law, and in safeguarding thereby the Jews of the Dispersion against the dangers to which their Jewish faith was exposed in their Gentile environment. So convinced, so uncompromising, so resolute was the youthful Pharisee of Tarsus.

2. Contact with the Gentile World

The Jews of the Dispersion could not help being brought into contact with the Gentiles, not only in trade but in wider fields. They were shy of social intercourse with Gentiles, but a measure of such intercourse was inevitable. The Greek language was a helpful means for Jew and Gentile getting to know, and possibly to some extent to appreciate, each other's way of looking at things. Greek was widely spoken in all the countries bordering on the Mediterranean Sea, especially in the cities and towns. For most of the Jews of the Dispersion in these countries Greek was their mother-tongue, although some of them may have been familiar with Aramaic,

the mother-tongue of the Jews of Palestine and of other Eastern countries, and fewer of them with Hebrew. It was Greek that was spoken for the most part in the home. It was the Greek translation of the sacred Scriptures—the Septuagint—which was used in the synagogue, and the greater part of the whole service in the synagogue was in Greek. This possession of a common language facilitated intercourse between Jews and Gentiles, but such intercourse had certain definite limitations.

An outstanding characteristic of the Jews of the Dispersion was the strength of their conviction of the superiority of their religion to that of the Gentiles. The strength of this conviction was only increased by increasing knowledge of the Gentile world. In many cases contact with the Gentiles may have had no other effect than intensifying contempt for their polytheistic religions and their loose morals. In other cases it awakened a desire to make the Gentiles sharers in their Jewish faith, to be "a guide to the blind, a light of them that are in darkness, a corrector of the foolish, a teacher of babes" (Rom. $2^{19, 20}$).

A Jewish *propaganda* had little chance of success with the majority of the Gentiles. There was a general and strong prejudice against the Jews wherever their peculiarities came to be known. Their cleverness in trade was disliked, and still more their haughty aloofness from other sections of the community. Satirists poked fun at their abstinence

from the use of swine's flesh, their strict observance of the Sabbath, their unneighbourliness, and their spiritual pride.

But in spite of this widespread anti-Jewish prejudice there were serious-minded Gentiles who were attracted by the Jewish faith, which they had come to know about from intercourse with Jews, from reading portions of the Greek translation of the Jewish scriptures, or from occasional attendance at the services in the synagogue. The popular religions, already undermined by the philosophers and men of letters, had ceased to "speak to their condition." Cognisant of the strength of the malign influences which were making for the moral corruption of the individual, of the home, and of the community, such Gentiles were disposed to welcome opportunities of getting into closer touch with a people who, whatever their peculiarities might be, stood for ethical monotheism and moral earnestness. So they looked wistfully towards the synagogue, with its faith in one God who was essentially righteous will, with its close linking of religion with morality, and with its helpful fellowship for fostering both the religious and the moral life.

There is abundant testimony that the appeal of the synagogue to Gentiles of this sort met with a remarkable response. Many of them became converts to the Jewish faith. Apart from the proselytes who accepted the yoke of the whole Law, there was a still larger number who accepted the ethical

monotheism and the ethical ideals of the Jews, but shrank from accepting circumcision and other merely national peculiarities. These are the Gentiles referred to in the New Testament as those who "worshipped (or reverenced) God," or as those who were "devout persons" (*e.g.* Acts 16^{14}, 17^{17}).

The contact of the Jews with the Gentile world had its effect upon themselves as well as upon the Gentiles.

It directed their special attention to those features of their Jewish faith which made a successful appeal to Gentiles who "worshipped God," but would not undertake to shape their life according to such precepts of the Law as seemed to them merely national customs of the Jews. The distinction between these two different aspects of their Jewish faith was thus forced upon them. For the majority of them loyalty to the whole Law was not thereby weakened. But it can be easily understood how some Jews, accustomed to see precepts of the Law about their national peculiarities treated as in some measure negligible for Gentiles who "worshipped God," should have been disposed to treat them as in some measure negligible for themselves.

But in one quarter contact with the Gentile world exercised an influence of a deeper kind upon the Jewish faith. Philo, a contemporary of Paul, tells us that there were a million Jews settled in Egypt. They were an influential and large part—two-fifths, it is said—of the population of Alex-

andria, the most cosmopolitan city of the Roman Empire, and the chief seat of Greek culture. Here Jewish *propaganda* assumed a special character. Highly educated Jews, familiar with and fascinated by the literature and philosophy of Greece, set themselves to find out the best way of commending the Jewish faith to their Gentile fellow-citizens. They acknowledged the worth of the great heritage bequeathed by the Greek poets and philosophers; they recognised the affinity of the best thought of Hellenism with their own conceptions of God and duty; they strove, by a lavish use of the allegorical method of interpretation, to explain (or explain away) certain things in their scriptures—known to Gentile Alexandrians through the Septuagint [1]—which were a stumbling-block to a cultured Gentile. So far was the apology for the Jewish faith sometimes carried along this line, that the result was a Greek philosophy squeezed into a Jewish framework. This was to some extent true of the greatest of the Alexandrian apologists for Judaism—Philo, a patriotic Jew, fervently loyal to what he believed to be the Jewish faith, though in his writings much of what was best and most distinctive in this faith is in danger of being obscured by a bewildering wealth of metaphysical speculations about the mysteries of the Godhead and the relation of God to the world. And even Philo has to utter a warning to compatriots

[1] It was Jews of Alexandria who had been chiefly responsible for the translation of the Jewish scriptures into Greek.

who seemed to him to be going too far in their zeal for accommodating the Jewish faith to Greek philosophy and civilisation.

There were, of course, strict Jews in Alexandria who distrusted and disliked this whole method of conducting the Jewish "apology." Among the Jews of the Dispersion elsewhere there is little trace of this apologetic method. But probably enough some of them had heard about it, and were troubled. In connection with annual pilgrimages to Jerusalem there were opportunities, for example, of Jews from Tarsus getting to know what was going on in the Jewish community at Alexandria.

Paul, though an exceptionally strict member of the strictest Jewish party, had yet a deep interest in the life of the Gentiles of Tarsus, and in several directions a sympathetic interest.

The contests in the Greek games were not particularly congenial to a Jew, but the vividness of Paul's illustrations from the foot-race and the boxing-match (Phil. $3^{13, 14}$, 1 Cor. 9^{25-27}) suggests that in his youth he had visited the *stadium* and taken a genial interest in the various exciting "events." That is, of course, a trifle, but it has its own significance.

He was fully and painfully cognisant of the shady side of the religious and moral life of his Gentile fellow-citizens. But he was not blind to its redeeming features. He recognised that among the Gentiles there were individuals who "shewed the work of the

law written in their hearts" and "did by nature the things of the law" (Rom. $2^{14, 15}$); who "by patience in well-doing sought for glory and honour and incorruption, eternal life" (Rom. 2^{7}). Nay more, he recognised that some of his compatriots might well have been put to the blush by the good life of some of the Gentiles: "If then the uncircumcised observe the requirements of the law, shall not their uncircumcision be accounted as equivalent to circumcision? And shall not those who are physically uncircumcised and who fulfil the law, judge you who are breakers of the law for all your written code and circumcision?" (Rom. $2^{26, 27}$ M.). Paul, the Pharisee, would not perhaps have expressed himself just in these terms, but the impressions made upon him by the good life of some of the Gentiles in Tarsus had their own part to play in shaping these cutting questions which in later days he addressed to the morally lax Jew. So impressions about the moral attainments of the Gentiles, first made upon him in Tarsus, and then strengthened by his later experience, may not unreasonably be conceived to lie behind the great passage in his letter to the Gentile Christians of Philippi: "Whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honourable, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue, if there be any praise (anything worthy of praise) think on these things" (Phil. 4^{8}).

His appreciation of the worth of the imperial government may also go back to his early experience. In Tarsus and elsewhere he had opportunities of learning what the *Pax Romana* meant for the maintenance of good order in the countries bordering on the Mediterranean Sea, and especially of learning how the imperial government had not only granted to the Jewish communities throughout the empire special privileges, but also protected them in the continued enjoyment of these privileges against periodical outbreaks of Gentile mobs against the unpopular Jews.

Such a sympathetic interest, on the part of a Pharisee "exceedingly zealous for the traditions of his fathers," in certain aspects of the life of the Gentile world deserves to be noted, and to be taken into account when we proceed to consider further what contact with the Gentile world meant for Paul.

There is no evidence that Paul slackened in his loyalty to Judaism as it had been developed under the guidance of generations of scribes. He was no "liberal" Jew; he was uncompromisingly "orthodox." There were Jews of his day, perhaps in the synagogue of Tarsus, who were disposed, for the sake of winning over Gentiles to the Jewish faith, to lay little stress on precepts of the Law about what the Gentiles regarded as merely the national customs of the Jewish people. Paul was not one of these. It was his ambition to be "found blameless, as

touching the righteousness which is in the law" (Phil. 3^6). Everything in the Law—written and oral—was, he believed, commanded by God. To set little store by any part of it was to make light of the authority of God, and so far to fail in "attaining righteousness." He was in dead earnest with the conception of the Law on which the Judaism of the scribes was built up.

But it does not necessarily follow that he was uninfluenced by the worthier side of the ethical teaching and religious philosophy of Hellenised Gentiles, and still less does it follow that he had little knowledge of it. Even if he did not set himself, like some of the Jews of Alexandria, to acquire such knowledge, a man of his exceptional intellectual gifts and with his environment could not well help acquiring at least a considerable measure of such knowledge. The opportunities were not lacking. He had a wide command of the Greek language; he habitually used the Greek translation of the Jewish scriptures; he not only spoke Greek fluently and discriminatingly, but seems also to have thought in Greek. It has been suggested that if, as is likely, he was for a time a pupil in a Greek school in Tarsus, his lesson-books might have contained extracts from the writings of the poets and philosophers of Greece.[1] Then, Tarsus was an important seat of learning and had special links with several outstanding Stoic philosophers. It would therefore attract the Stoic

[1] J. Weiss, *Die Christliche Freiheit*, p. 9.

" missionaries " who at that period went from city to city as popular preachers of the Stoic faith. If Paul did not hear their addresses in the lecture-room, he might stop and listen to their street preaching. Anyhow, in his intercourse with Gentile fellow-citizens the teaching of the Stoics may well have been the subject of many a talk. Whether "The Wisdom of Solomon" (about 100 B.C.)—one of the most interesting writings in the Apocrypha—was included in the Septuagint at this date is not certain. It is a book by an Alexandrian Jew who had been deeply influenced by Greek philosophy, and more especially by the teaching of the Stoics. That it was prized by Paul is suggested by several passages in his letters. If it was known to him in his pre-Christian days, it must have stimulated his interest in what he had already learned about the ethical and religious teaching of the Stoics and other Greek philosophers.

What effect this knowledge of Greek thought had upon Paul in his pre-Christian days is indicated by his letters. We find there, in large number, phrases and turns of thought which he owes to his knowledge of the vocabulary and teaching of Gentiles who had come under the influence of Stoicism. Something must here be attributed to his experience as an apostle to the Gentile world, but the starting-point was his experience in Tarsus. Knowledge gained in his earlier years may not have been understood at the time in its full significance. For

example, though he was familiar in his earlier years with the frequent use by the Stoics of the word *συνείδησις* (conscience), it may only have been through what he learned as a Christian about the good life having its true source in the inner life of the heart that the full range of its significance was disclosed to him.

Though impressions were made upon him by Greek thought in his pre-Christian days, they were not such as to weaken his tenacious devotion to Judaism as interpreted by the scribes, and to dispose him towards sympathy with "liberal" Judaism. (As we shall see in the next chapter, he had experience as a Pharisee of a sore spiritual conflict, but that conflict had nothing to do with Greek thought; it was waged within the limits of his Jewish faith.) Whether these impressions had afterwards any important influence upon his Christian faith is a question which will answer itself, when we understand what his Christian faith was and how he came by it.

Paul's attitude to his Gentile environment arrests attention. There would have been nothing surprising if a Jew "exceeding zealous for the traditions of his fathers" had assumed towards the Gentile world an attitude of contempt or of indifference, as there is nothing surprising in a liberal Jew like Philo manifesting a wide sympathy with Greek thought. But it *is* surprising to find a Jew of Paul's scrupulous

strictness taking the interest he did in the Gentile world. This suggests that Paul was a quite uncommon Jew, and that we may go astray in interpreting him, if we judge him by average standards.

That the problem of the Gentile world had even in his early years lain long and heavily upon his heart is indicated by his own remarkable words: "When it was the good pleasure of God . . . to reveal his Son in me, *that I might preach him among the Gentiles*" (Gal. $1^{15, 16}$). He had read what the prophets said about the blessings that would yet accrue to the Gentiles through Israel. It may be that even in his early years he had put to himself the question: "Is God the God of Jews only? is He not the God of Gentiles also?" (Rom. 3^{29}). He knew the spiritual need of the Gentiles; he knew how the Jewish faith, and especially certain aspects of it, appealed to many of them. His big human heart went out to the Gentiles. He longed to be their helper—their helper by bringing them over to the Jewish faith. Was he sometimes visited by a conviction that God might have a special service for him to render to the Gentile world? And did this conviction intensify his determination to be whole-heartedly loyal to his Jewish faith, that he might be the more fit for whatever task God would lay upon him?

CHAPTER III

UNREST IN THE HEART OF THE PHARISEE

Paul owed much to his discipline under the Law. It concentrated his attention on the attainment of a good and God-pleasing life as the supreme interest, and it gave him a singular strength of moral fibre. Even in his early years the one question which pushed all others into the background was this: How can I be a good man? And for the interpretation of Paul and Paulinism it is all-important to have this constantly in view.

In his quest for a good life he was controlled by the ideal embodied in the Law as developed by the scribes. In that ideal the stress was not laid upon the good heart as the secret of true goodness. The stress was laid elsewhere—upon strict obedience to the multitudinous statutory precepts of the Law. It was along this line Paul, as a Pharisee, strove to be a good man. To be "blameless as touching the righteousness which is in the Law"—it was for that he was "exceedingly zealous." He was not encouraged by the Law itself to draw a distinction between the weightier matters of the Law and matters of less importance. All the precepts of the Law were so far on the same level that each of them was the authoritative

command of God, and that obedience to each of them was required if a good life was to be attained.

It may readily be granted that in many directions there would be wholesome departures from the strict ideal dominant in the Jewish circles in whose atmosphere Paul was reared. There may well have been individual Pharisees who regarded ethical and also ceremonial precepts less as mere statutes to be obeyed externally than as helps to strengthen the inner life of the heart; that is, who had regard to the motive inspiring obedience. But, if we judge by his attitude to the Law as this is disclosed in his letters, Paul was held in the grip of the strictest legalism. It is said that he ought not to have been held so firmly in its grip. It is pointed out that he could have toned down the strict ideal of legalism by the scriptures with which he was so familiar—by such words of the prophet as these: "I will put my law in their inward parts, and in their heart will I write it" (Jer. 31^{33}), and by such words of the Psalmist as these: "I will run the way of thy commandments, when thou shalt enlarge my heart" (Ps. 119^{32}). It is also pointed out that there was room in the Judaism of the rabbis for more than strict legalism. For example, one rabbi is credited with this saying: "Do God's will, as if it were thy will"; and another rabbi, who was asked as to "the good way to which a man must cleave," is said to have answered: "A good heart."

All that would be relevant to the question whether Paul as a Pharisee escaped from the grip of strict

legalism by means of the writings of Israel's prophets and psalmists, and the occasional sayings of the rabbis. But that question is not raised ; it could not well be raised. As a matter of fact, the hold upon him of the strict ideal of the good life espoused by Judaism was so rigorous—it is said, so unnecessarily rigorous —that not even the teaching of the prophets, well known to him though it was, could avail to slacken it.

But was he not, as modern apologists for the Pharisees suggest, unjust to the Judaism of his day in thus ignoring that it left room for greater stress on goodness of heart than on external obedience to statutory precepts, on the weightier matters of the Law than on mere ceremonial observances ?

On this question light is thrown by what happened in Palestine, when Paul was a young man. There appeared a teacher who laid the whole stress on " the inner stage on which ethical processes take place " ; who proclaimed that there can be no good life in the absence of a good heart ; who drew a sharp distinction between the weightier matters of the Law and the tithing of anise and mint and cummin ; who insisted that the secret of true purity was to be found, not in obedience to rules about the ritual washing of the hands and the ritual cleansing of cups and platters, but in the pure heart, out of which alone a man can bring forth good things. The attitude which the Pharisees, on the ground of such teaching, took up towards Jesus is a damaging proof that there was not much room in Jewish

legalism for an ideal of the good life which put in the forefront a good heart and the weightier matters of the Law. The Cross to which the Pharisees brought the prophet of Nazareth goes far to absolve Paul from the charge of going astray in interpreting the ideal of goodness in the Judaism of the scribes as external obedience to a system of multitudinous statutory precepts.

This at any rate is how Paul *did* interpret goodness according to the Law. But there is something more to be said. Alongside of his recognition of the whole Law—written and oral—as the ideal of a good life, and of his exceeding zeal for the scrupulous observance of all its precepts, there entered into his spiritual experience another factor which was at the root of the sore conflict which shook him to the deepest deep of his being.

He had caught sight of an ideal of goodness transcending that of external obedience to the precepts of the Law. Dim the vision may have been, and not well understood by him, but it was a real thing, and a real thing with immense possibilities in it. It was real enough to create a great unrest in his heart. How he came by this vision of a higher than legal goodness we cannot tell. It was an integral part of his moral personality; an original endowment, or rather, let us say, a gift of God. Such a vision of a higher kind of goodness was only possible to one whose chief ambition was to be a good man, and who was loyal to the best light he had.

Unrest in the Heart of the Pharisee

If Paul had been a commonplace Pharisee, he might have found satisfaction in the blamelessness he had attained "as touching the righteousness which is in the law." If his zeal for the Law had been prompted by selfish motives, by a desire for gaining esteem and influence in the Jewish community with the resultant reward in various worldly advantages, or by a desire to escape pain and enter into the enjoyment of pleasure in the day of the divine judgment, there would have been little ground for unrest of heart. But Paul was not a commonplace Pharisee. He was as little infected as Pharisee ever was by the worldliness and self-seeking which stirred the indignation of Jesus. Even in view of the Judgment Day, which he had learned even as a Pharisee to think of as a great and awful reality, his chief question was, not: How can I be safe there and then? but this other: How can I be a good man here and now?

What differentiated Paul from the typical Pharisee was the forceful, if vaguely understood, intrusion of a vision of goodness other and higher than blameless obedience to the Law.

This is no merely imaginative picture of Paul's experience under the Law; it is the picture he has himself given us in that seventh chapter of the epistle to the Romans, which is of quite fundamental importance for a right understanding of his inner life in his pre-Christian days. This is not, as it used sometimes to be said, a picture of his experience

as a Christian. It is true that the experience here depicted is not that of the "natural man," if dogmatic theory arbitrarily minimises what is possible in the spiritual experience of the "natural man." Paul was not a "natural man" in the depreciatory sense of that phrase; he was a man with an exceptional spiritual experience, whose possibility that ambiguous phrase does not readily suggest.

This account of his experience under the Law was written when he was a Christian. It may therefore justly be said that only in the light of his experience as a Christian did he come to a full understanding of the unrest in his heart, and that the phraseology he uses in describing it is due in some measure to the experience of his later years. But that does not affect the fact that what he here describes is what he actually experienced.

We shall the better understand this illumining bit of autobiography if we consider how he happened to give it. He has been warning his readers against being enticed by Judaising Christians to believe that the ideal of the Christian life involves obedience to the Jewish Law, and he has been striving to bring them to concentrate upon a higher kind of goodness. "Now," he says, "we have been discharged from the law, having died to that (the law) wherein we were holden; so that we serve in newness of the spirit, not in oldness of the letter (the law)" (Rom. 7^6). To illustrate and enforce these words, he goes back to his own experience under the Law.

For the sake of his readers he lifts the veil for a moment from what he himself passed through in his early years. That means that the subject of this autobiographic reminiscence is the contrast and conflict between two ideals of goodness.

"The good which I would I do not: but the evil which I would not, that I practise" (Rom. 7^{19})—that confession is a convenient starting-point for unravelling the connection of his thoughts in this story of his experience. These words cannot mean that he was powerless to render external obedience to the statutory precepts of the Law. He himself tells us that he was "blameless as touching the righteousness which is in the law," and such blamelessness he could never have attained without the successful forth-putting of moral power of an exceptional kind. We are here withdrawn from the sphere of external obedience to the Law, and brought into the sanctuary of the inner life. We are made aware of the disturbing influence of that ideal of a higher kind of goodness which was responsible for his unrest of heart. "I delight in the law of God after the inward man" (Rom. 7^{22})—not the law of God as a system of statutory precepts, but as the higher ethical ideal of which he has caught sight. It is in presence of this ideal he discovers his moral helplessness. Put forth what resources of will-power he can command, and these are exceptionally great, he finds himself powerless to make this ideal effective in his life. "To will is present with me, but to do that

which is good is not" (Rom. 7^{18}). His better self is whole-heartedly on the side of the dimly comprehended ideal which haunts him, but he is painfully conscious of a malign power at work, fighting it down. The impulse of the better self towards the ideal is brought up against, and defeated by, another kind of impulse—an evil impulse deep-seated in his heart and of inordinate strength. "The law is spiritual: but I am carnal, sold under sin" (Rom. 7^{14}). "I delight in the law of God after the inward man: but I see a different law in my members, warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity under the law of sin which is in my members" (Rom. $7^{22, 23}$). In this conflict his real self is loyal to the high ideal, but it is overborne by an alien power. "If what I would not, that I do, it is no more I that do it, but sin that dwelleth in me" (Rom. 7^{20}).

Here there is no help for him in external obedience to the precepts of the Law. Strive as he may to be scrupulously obedient, and succeed as he may, the Law leaves him in the lurch; it is no match for the evil impulse in the heart; it cannot set him free to soar to the heights whither the "inward man" would go. The Law has not been useless; it has intensified his knowledge of sin, of the "exceeding" power of the evil impulse in his heart; it is through the Law itself he has come to realise that it is powerless to set his better self free from the galling bondage of sin. In this sense, his experience under

the Law has been "a manifestation of the spirit and the power of good within him." [1] In Paul's spiritual experience there is something uncommon, something tragic. His supreme ambition is to be a good man; he has been taught to identify goodness with strict obedience to the Law as interpreted by the scribes; in the depths of his heart there lives and works an ideal of a higher kind of goodness; he gets no help for the realisation of this ideal from all his moral earnestness and moral discipline; he is as "a bird pecking at the bars of the cage and longing to soar." His experience is focussed in the bitter cry which is wrung from his sorely troubled heart: "O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me out of this body of death?" (Rom. 7^{24}). The response with which, as he tells us at the close of this autobiographic reminiscence, this cry was met throws back light on the experience which gave rise to it: "I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord. . . . The law of the spirit of life in Christ Jesus made me free from the law of sin and of death" [2] (Rom. 7^{25}, 8^{2}).

[1] E. Caird, *The Evolution of Religion*, ii. 212.

[2] Paul accepted the view which seems to have been common in later Judaism, that the origin of physical death is to be found in man's sin. His acceptance of this theory throws light upon one or two turns of thought in his epistles, but his dominant Christian convictions are not dependent upon it. It has to be noted that in speaking of death as the consequence of sin he lets the conception of physical death pass over into that of spiritual death—eternal ruin, ἀπώλεια.

This conflict, which stood out in Paul's memory as a dominant feature of his early experience, took place in the sphere of his ethical life. But the question: "How can I be a good man? in which it had its origin, started this other question: How can I get into a right relation with God? He drew no sharp distinction between the ethical and the religious spheres. They were but different aspects of one and the same reality. Goodness and God represented one interest. The conception of goodness was reflected in his conception of God, as the conception of God was reflected in his conception of goodness.

In the seventh chapter of the epistle to the Romans it is the conception of goodness on which Paul's attention is concentrated—a fact of which special notice should be taken. But this involves the conception of God and of his own relation to God.

The conception of goodness as essentially obedience to a system of divinely imposed precepts tends to carry with it the conception of God as essentially a Legislator and a Judge. Paul's experience under the Law stirred within him a certain impatience with the Law, a very real, if unexpressed, grudge against the Law. This attitude to the Law was reflected in his attitude to God. This legal relation to God was irksome. He felt himself alienated from the God of the Law. He had a real, if vague, longing for such a warmer, more intimate relation to God as he had read of in the utterances of the psalmists and prophets. But the way was blocked.

He felt himself far from being at home with God. The gift of the Law to God's chosen people may have been the expression of His special love for them. It may have been intended to be the means of drawing them into fellowship with Himself. But with Paul it had no such result. It failed to bring him near to God in trustful fellowship. It was no help to peace with God. "The commandment, which was unto life, this I found to be unto death" (Rom. 7^{10}). The God of the Law was against him, passed sentence of condemnation upon him. A deep thirst for reconciliation, for some close fellowship with a God of love, was involved in the cry: "O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me?" and that cry was answered in the same hour and by the same means as his cry for a higher kind of goodness: "I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord. . . . There is therefore now no condemnation to them that are in Christ Jesus" (Rom. 7^{25}, 8^{1}).

CHAPTER IV

PAUL'S KNOWLEDGE OF JESUS BEFORE HIS CONVERSION

THE story of Paul's career as a persecutor of the followers of Jesus helps us to estimate how much he may have known about their Master's life and teaching before he himself became a Christian. The consideration of this question is important, for we may be thereby helped to understand not only how he became a Christian, but also what his spiritual experience was when the sudden revolution took place.

Our natural starting-point is the attitude of the Pharisees towards Jesus in the days of His public ministry.

Jesus was a unique personality, with a unique experience of fellowship with God and with a new ideal of the good and God-pleasing life. It was out of the mysterious depths of His own inner life that He taught as He did, and acted as He did. For Jews who were devotedly attached to the Law as interpreted by the scribes He was amazingly, perplexingly original; dangerously original. He seemed to be a good man and a pious man, but He diverged in startling and suspicious ways from the accepted and divinely authorised standards of the

Jewish faith. He set little store by obedience to several precepts of the Law, and great store by love manifesting itself in sympathy, service, and self-sacrifice. He was continually insisting upon a good heart as the only secret of a good life. That in itself would have been pardonable, if it had been accompanied by an equal insistence upon the necessity of loyalty to the whole Law. But He spoke of one and another precept of the Law as if it were of relatively little importance. He drew dangerous distinctions between weightier matters of the Law and the tithing of anise and mint and cummin; between the purity of a good heart and the ritual cleansing of the hands and of cups and platters. He might regard the Sabbath as "made for man," as a great boon for man, but He had little regard for what the oral Law, as developed by the scribes, had enjoined about the limits within which it was lawful to heal the sick on that day; He was too ready, in His defence of doing good on the Sabbath, to quote the words of the prophet: "I will have mercy, and not sacrifice." He dared explicitly to call in question the authority of the oral Law; to assert that "the traditions of the elders" had "made void the word of God." He went still further; He spoke as if it belonged to Him to sit in judgment even upon the written Law. Originality of this sort was indeed startling. Startling also was His treatment of sinners; amongst whom were classed individuals whose moral delinquencies were

less obvious than their neglect of that ritual side of the Law which was honoured and observed by respectable Jews. His love for "sinners" drew Him to their side. He did not wait till they had repented of their disregard of the Law; He took the initiative; He went down amongst them just as they were. ("This man receiveth sinners and eateth with them.") To some of the onlookers, to scribes and Pharisees, this friendly treatment of sinners seemed to be fraught with peril to the Law as the divine standard of goodness. Especially obnoxious was the picture drawn by Jesus of the "two men, who went up into the temple to pray; the one a Pharisee and the other a publican," with the comment on the publican which followed: "This man went down to his house justified rather than the other" (Luke 18^{9-14}).

It was not only natural but inevitable that the Pharisees, the recognised champions of strict Judaism, should have been alarmed at the teaching and activity of this prophet from Nazareth, who was winning favour and influence with many of the Jews. He was undermining the foundations on which their whole religious system rested.

The conflict between the Pharisees and Jesus turned upon a question of momentous importance. It was a conflict between two ideals of goodness; between an ideal which made everything hinge on obedience to a system of statutory precepts, and an ideal which made everything hinge on the inner life,

on a good heart, on a heart inspired by a great love. In the presence of Jesus the Pharisees were confronted with these two divergent ideals. For the choice they made between them the atmosphere of the legalism of later Judaism was largely responsible. So obsessed were they by the ideal of goodness fostered for many generations by this legalism, that they were blind to the grandeur of the ideal of Jesus. They could only regard Him as a subtle and dangerous enemy of the Law, and therefore an enemy of God who was its author. In throwing the whole weight of their immense influence against the new teacher and His new teaching they believed that they were fighting for the cause of God. Granted that they were right in their interpretation of what constitutes true goodness in the sight of God, they could not have believed anything else, and they could not have taken up any other attitude towards Jesus. Their conception of the Law forced them to pursue Jesus with relentless hostility and to work for His death. And they worked with success. His crucifixion was the apparent victory of their ideal of goodness over that of Jesus. But in reality the Cross has been the eternal condemnation of the ideal of the Pharisees. In this sense at least, the Cross of Jesus has been "the end of the Law" (Rom. 10^4).

Let us now turn from the Pharisees to Paul. We do not know whether he had ever seen or heard Jesus in the days of His flesh. His words "though we have known Christ after the flesh" (2 Cor. 5^{16})

do not necessarily mean that he had. But if he had never seen or heard Jesus in the days of His flesh, we know that he was in Jerusalem not long after His crucifixion. The Pharisees of Jerusalem had discovered that the Cross had not put an end to the trouble which Jesus had caused them. His followers had recovered from the stupor and despair into which His death had plunged them. Convinced that He had not been "holden of death," that by His spirit He was still present with them, they were boldly proclaiming in Jerusalem that the crucified Jesus, victor over death, was the Christ of God, and were adding daily to the number of those who confessed Him as their Lord. The Pharisees were alarmed at this strange situation. They imagined that they had once and for ever got rid of Jesus, and here were His followers, with their belief in Him not only unshaken but actually strengthened, resolute to carry on the work He had begun, and prepared even to die for their Master's cause. Something, the Pharisees were convinced, must be done to crush the followers as their Leader had been crushed. The new problem with which they were confronted involved a new menace to the Jewish religion.

Let us picture what might happen when Paul met the Pharisees of Jerusalem. He may have had little knowledge of the life and teaching of Jesus before His crucifixion, but he was not the man to fall in with proposed plans for bringing to an end the mischievous activities of His followers, still less

to take a leading part in carrying them out, without getting what knowledge the Pharisees could give him about what Jesus stood for. They had ample stores to draw upon. They had long been watching the career of the prophet of Nazareth, and gathering from many quarters information about the startling things He said and did. They had no lack of evidence to prove to Paul that the teaching and life of Jesus had been a deadly peril to their Jewish religion and especially to their God-given Law. Is it a mistaken conjecture that on this point the information Paul received from them may have been not less, but more full, than what is given in our Gospels? Whether this conjecture be well or ill founded, it is not easy to believe that Paul, whom we must credit with having in his youth a measure of the tenderness of heart which he certainly had in his later years, could have contemplated playing the part of a persecutor of the Christians unless he had been convinced that there was something of quite exceptional importance at stake. And of that he could not well have been convinced without learning a great deal about Jesus; not only about His attitude to the Law, but also about other aspects of His life and teaching.

Paul, "more exceedingly zealous for the traditions of his fathers," could not but have been deeply stirred by what he learned about Jesus from his fellow-Pharisees. He saw, perhaps more clearly than any of them, the far-reaching significance of His attitude to the Law. He saw in this a deadly

menace to that Law with which he associated all that gave life its worth and meaning, in which all his highest hopes and interests were centred. It was not only for himself as an individual he was concerned. A true-hearted patriot, he was alarmed at the disaster with which the Jewish nation was threatened, if the teaching of Jesus was perpetuated through His followers. Now that there was no longer a Jewish State, the Law was the one institution which made possible a Jewish nation. If this was undermined, what bond was left to unite and preserve the Jewish people? The cause of the nation was at stake; nay more, the cause of God, of whose will the Law was the final and authoritative expression. How inevitable, then, was it that Paul, with a clear conscience and a resolute vigour, should step forth as a ringleader in the persecution of the followers of Jesus.

With Paul there may have been an exceptional spur to his persecuting zeal—a spur which came from the unrest in his own heart. Did some of the sayings and doings of Jesus, as reported to him by the Pharisees, give a disturbing meaning to the vision of a higher kind of goodness by which he was haunted? If he knew from the Pharisees the Parable of the Prodigal Son—or teaching equivalent to that of this parable—which was spoken by Jesus in answer to the complaint, "This man receiveth sinners and eateth with them," was Paul conscious that the picture of the father of the prodigal son

was putting a fresh edge upon his longing for a closer and warmer relation to God than he had yet experienced? There was affinity between Jesus and the ideals both of goodness and of fellowship with God towards which Paul in his deepest heart was vaguely and ineffectually feeling out. May not a recognition by Paul of this affinity have intensified his sense of the danger of the followers of Jesus making a too successful appeal to Jews in whose heart there might be a "traitor within the camp"? Was it not true, indeed, of Paul's own heart, that there was a "traitor within the camp"? What he had learned about Jesus may have given fresh force to those deeper aspirations of his whose satisfaction he had striven for and had not yet found, and may thereby have intensified the unrest in his heart. Was the hope of stilling this unrest one of the potent motives which impelled him to play the dread rôle of a persecutor?

A man of exceptional intellectual acumen, eager to understand a problem in all its bearings, Paul could not well have begun his work as a persecutor without an adequate knowledge of Jesus and of what He stood for. In carrying out his work as a persecutor he could not fail to gain further knowledge. He was brought into close contact with the followers of Jesus in the synagogues and in their homes. He would get to know of their extraordinary devotion to the crucified Jesus, whom they still, in spite of the

tragic end of His career, revered and loved as the Christ of God. He would learn something about their interpretation of the crucifixion of Jesus—that a great love for His fellows was its inspiration; that He went forward to His death with resolute purposefulness, convinced that the Cross belonged to God's plan for Him, and would prove to be the divine means for securing ultimate victory for His cause. His followers would tell how they found in the fate of their Master a parallel to that of the Servant of the Lord who was "despised and rejected of men" and "led as a lamb to the slaughter." Paul would learn, too, how unshakable was the assurance of His followers that Jesus who was put to death on the Cross was still present in their hearts. Further, he would learn that the followers of Jesus were obsessed by the conviction that their Master was the Leader in that Kingdom of God for whose advent devout souls had long waited and prayed; that with Jesus the "new age" had already dawned.

What Paul got to know about the character of the followers of Jesus whom he was persecuting must also have thrown fresh light upon their Master. Though the passion of hostility blinds even worthy men to what with other eyes they would regard as noble and heroic, he could not have been altogether unmoved by the bearing of the followers of Jesus under persecution; by their freedom from unworthy passions, by their steadfastness, by their joy under

suffering, by their radiant hope, by the singular loftinesss of spirit which inspired the prayer of the dying Stephen for his persecutors—for Paul himself: "Lord, lay not this sin to their charge." Did Paul ever pause to ask: What must Jesus Himself have been, to lift the men and women he was harrying to such heights? Was the personality of Jesus the secret of that strange inward peace of His followers, to which his own heart was a stranger?

It was in making up his mind, after consultation with the Pharisees, to be a persecutor of the Christians and in carrying out his work as a persecutor that Paul, it is probable, got his knowledge about the life and teaching of Jesus. Gained in these circumstances, when he was in a highly-strung state of excitement, that knowledge must have gripped him—so gripped him that he had a fairly clear insight into the significance of the career of Jesus. More clearly perhaps than most of the Christians themselves, he perceived that the ideals of Jesus were so subversive of the Law as interpreted by the scribes, that it was absolutely impossible to be loyal both to the Law and to Jesus. For those who resolved to be loyal to the Law, there was no other course open but to bend their strength to put an end to the influence of Jesus. Paul did not stop to ask whether the Judaism of the scribes might not be revised in the light of the ideals of Jesus, or if the question did for a moment thrust itself upon him, he crushed it down.

It was far too dangerous a question for Paul, conscious of the unrest in his own heart, to dally with. The ideals of Jesus, however, could not thus be put out of action. They might be thrust aside, but the hour was at hand when they were to come into the field with a decisive effect

CHAPTER V

THE SUDDEN REVOLUTION

Conversion, the word commonly used to describe the great crisis in Paul's life, may suggest experiences which are not analogous to his. His experience was exceptional. He had not been living on low moral levels. He had been no worldling, little mindful of life's higher values. He had been no self-seeking Pharisee, making use of his religion as a stalking-horse to gain honour and influence in the community and for other similar ends. On the contrary, his supreme interest had been in moral values; his supreme ambition had been to be a good man. Not only had his moral earnestness been a remarkable feature of his early years, but he had also been intensely religious. He had been dominated by the thought of God as a tremendous reality, and his chief concern had been how to be right with God, to whom he was responsible for what he made of his life. We are, therefore, not to conceive of Paul, before the crisis came, as hesitating, like Augustine, between the claims of the lower self and the claims of the higher self. What took place in his great hour was on a different plane from the experience of Augustine when his long-drawn-out struggle

between the two wills, " the one carnal, the other spiritual," was brought to an end. There was more in Paul's experience than the victory of the will to do good over the will to do evil : there was a revolution, as sudden as it was far-reaching, in his conception of goodness and of God—a revolution so radical that the foundation on which his ethical and religious life had been reared gave way, and his whole spiritual outlook was transformed. We are familiar with instances of the sudden conversion of individuals from carelessness or loose-living to moral seriousness, from the love of the world to the love of Christ, and we are familiar with instances of individuals arriving at higher conceptions of goodness and God which have their issue in a transformation of their spiritual outlook ; but what is singular in Paul's experience is the combination of a revolution in his conception of goodness and God with the suddenness with which it took place.

Though we may not be able to *explain* how this sudden revolution took place, in the sense in which we can explain a mechanical effect by the antecedent mechanical conditions, we can indicate how it was prepared for ; that is, we can show an intelligible connection between Paul's early experiences and the crisis in which they culminated.

To two of these early experiences let us here recall attention.

In the first place, there was the unrest in the heart

of the Pharisee. Paul, as we have seen, was persistently engrossed with the question: How can I be a good man? He was dominated by the answer given to this question by the later Judaism as developed by the scribes. But more exceedingly zealous though he was for the traditions of his fathers, he was restless at heart. He was haunted by a dim vision of a goodness higher than external obedience to the precepts of the Law, and his redoubled efforts to be more strict in his obedience did not avail to bring him inward peace. Further, he was stirred in the deepest deep of his heart with a longing for a more intimate relation to God than all his struggles under the Law had availed to win for him. He felt estranged from the God of the Law, from God as mere Legislator and Judge; he felt that there was resting upon him not the divine favour, but the divine condemnation. As the result of all his sore striving after goodness and God under the Law there was wrung from him the cry: "O wretched man that I am!" (Rom. 7^{24}).

In the second place, there was his knowledge of the life and teaching of Jesus, gained from his fellow-Pharisees before he began his career as a persecutor and from the followers of Jesus in the course of persecuting them. What he learned of the ideals of goodness and of God's relation to man by which Jesus was inspired came close to the sore of his own heart. He may have been dimly aware of this, but his passionate zeal for the Law and for the God of

the Law inhibited him from letting his thoughts dwell on the significance of these ideals. Nevertheless impressions had been made upon him. However he might strive to deaden them, they were still alive and at work.

Aspects such as these of Paul's early experiences may help us to see an intelligible connection between his early history and the sudden revolution which cut his life in two. But go as far as we may in this direction, we find that in our efforts to understand this sudden revolution we are at the end confronted with mysteries. "Deep is the well of the soul, for at the bottom there is God." Where God and the soul meet there are depths, unfathomable depths, which are beyond the reach of our sounding-lines. But, because the deep things of the soul are mysterious, they are not therefore unreal. On the contrary, it is in the regions of human experience where mystery most abounds that life's ultimate realities are most surely found. It is therefore fitting that in studying the sudden revolution in Paul's spiritual outlook we should recognise how inadequate our processes of intellectual analysis may be to the manifold wealth of the experience itself, and how it may be our true wisdom to hope for nothing more than an account of it, more or less satisfying to intelligence, and to leave wide room for mysteries which we cannot fathom.

To the Acts of the Apostles we are indebted for

most of our information about the external circumstances in which Paul's sudden revolution took place, but for an understanding of its spiritual significance it is to his own letters we must chiefly look as our guiding light.

In the first chapter of the epistle to the Galatians we have a brief summary of his own interpretation of its spiritual significance in these words: "It was the good pleasure of God . . . to reveal his Son in me" (Gal. $1^{15, 16}$). He is here silent about the external circumstances; he concentrates attention upon what it meant in his spiritual experience. God made a disclosure of Himself to his heart. The accent is laid upon God's Son through whom this disclosure was mediated. It was not the God of the Law who thus disclosed Himself; it was God in Christ. Jesus, the Jesus of whom he had learned so much, was no mere historical figure, who had passed away; He was present to Paul in that hour, alive and at work in the inner sanctuary of his heart. There could be no doubt in Paul's mind that Jesus had conquered death. For himself, he needed no other proof of this than his experience of the power of the risen Jesus. In that experience his faith in the resurrection of Jesus was immovably rooted.

At the close of the seventh chapter of the epistle to the Romans, and at the beginning of the eighth, we have a question and its answer which tell us somewhat more specifically what the revelation of "God's Son in him" meant for Paul: "Who shall

deliver me out of the body of this death ? . . . The law of the spirit of life in Christ Jesus made me free from the law of sin and of death" (Rom. 7^{24}, 8^{2}). Paul had been struggling, with what strength of will he could put forth, to become a good man, but his will to do good was frustrated by the strength of the evil impulse in his heart. What he sighed for, and sighed for in vain, was the incoming of another kind of impulse which would master and expel this evil impulse. Suddenly and mysteriously there came to him the new impulse for which he had been sighing. The spirit of life in Jesus Christ flooded his whole being. "He had been struggling in vain to reach the port in the teeth of the wind, and had been lifted into it by a huge wave. A power, not himself, had taken over his life, giving him strength to do what before he had been unable to do. . . . The heart which had been hard was melted by a divine fire." [1]

Along with, or rather indissolubly linked with, this experience of the new impulse of the spirit of life in Christ Jesus—the new impulse of a mighty love—there was a new experience of God. "God shined in our hearts to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ" (2 Cor. 4^{6}). Paul had been striving to win the favour of God by a scrupulous obedience to the precepts of the Law, and striving in vain. Now he made the

[1] Professor Percy Gardner, *The Religious Experience of St Paul*, p. 31.

amazing discovery that God was beforehand with him. The love of God was shed abroad in his heart. The divine favour was no reward for any merit of his; it was the expression of an infinite love which could not help reaching down to him and pressing in upon him. The God of the Law might wait for Paul to climb up to Him; the God of Grace, God in Christ, took the initiative, and freely, apart from the works of the Law, bestowed His love upon him. This was a new experience of God which involved a revolution in his conception of God.

It has also to be noted that the sudden revolution meant for Paul an experience of the inbreaking of the new order associated with the advent of the Messiah. The Jews of that day, humiliated by the miserable condition of their national life, and chafing under it, were sustained by an unconquerable hope of a brighter future for their nation and for its individual members. They fed this hope of theirs on the visions of the prophets, and on the glowing pictures, drawn by the writers of apocalypses, of the "new age" which would assuredly be inaugurated, and at no distant date, by some startling intervention of God Himself. Some of the Jews may have been chiefly interested in the material advantages which would accrue to themselves and to their nation from the restoration of national freedom and prosperity. A Jew like Paul, however, would be chiefly interested in the things of higher value, which he associated with the divine inauguration of the "new age"—

freedom from the tyranny of the evil impulse, acceptance with God, closer fellowship with God, eternal, deathless life. So Paul's new experience made him sure that the "new age" had already begun. Its full development belonged, indeed, to the future, but it was already present, at work here and now.

The transformation of his whole spiritual outlook stirred Paul into adoring wonder. He found himself in a new world. "If any man is in Christ, there is a new creation: the old things are passed away; behold, they are become new" (2 Cor. 5^{17}). He compares what God did in revealing His Son in him to what, according to the old story of the Creation in Genesis, He did when He said: "Light shall shine out of darkness" (2 Cor. 4^{6}). His sudden revolution meant passing from darkness into light, from bondage into freedom, from unrest into peace, from fear into confidence, from despair into hope.

Further light is thrown upon Paul's interpretation of the spiritual significance of his sudden revolution, when we consider some of the main features of his new experience as a Christian which are thrown into relief in his letters. For these features were implicit in his initial experience, though Paul may not explicitly connect them with it. It is convenient to refer to these features at the present stage, but to refer to them briefly, as some of the topics will demand fuller treatment later on.

There are two aspects under which this new

experience has to be considered: (1) its God-ward side, and (2) its man-ward side.

1. The God-ward Side of the New Experience

Referring to his early life, Paul tells us in one letter that he "advanced in the Jews' religion beyond many of his own age" (Gal. 1^{14}), and in another that he was "blameless, as touching the righteousness which is in the law" (Phil. 3^{6}). That argues will-power of an exceptional strength, and will-power directed to no selfish and unworthy things. This strenuous and persistent exercise of will-power had a vital connection with the sudden revolution in his life, but in the sudden revolution itself his own will-power was in the background. What he was chiefly conscious of, what amazed him, was the gracious power of God.

To describe his experience of this gracious power of God he makes use of many different phrases, which denote not different things but only different aspects of one and the same experience. Four of these phrases may be singled out for notice.

Redemption

Paul has had experience of God's redeeming power laying its hold upon him through Jesus Christ. Groaning under the sense of the power of the evil impulse which held his better self in galling captivity and rendered him powerless to do the

good that he would, he had cried out for a Redeemer to set him free. Suddenly the Redeemer appears and breaks open the door of his prison-house. He is conscious of the incoming into his heart of a new power, which beats down the power of the evil impulse. Freedom from the evil deep-seated in his heart—it is for that he gives thanks to his Redeemer, God in Christ Jesus. Such freedom is the core of his conception of redemption. In the light of redemption conceived as deliverance from the power of indwelling sin, we can best interpret what he has to say about redemption from the law, from "this present evil world," from the bondage of corruption, and from death.

Reconciliation

Paul had longed to be at peace with God, but strive as he might by strict obedience to the precepts of the Law to merit the assurance of God's favour, he was ill at ease in his relation to God. He felt himself condemned by God, estranged from God. Then God through Christ disclosed Himself as a God of Grace, flooding his heart with an overpowering sense of His love. In that experience he felt himself at home with God, at peace with God, reconciled with God. The reconciling love of God in Christ "brought him into the very heart of God,"[1] into that intimate fellowship with God

[1] T. R. Glover's phrase.

towards which he had been blindly but ardently groping his way.

Adoption

To describe the experience of this reconciling love of God, Paul makes use of other modes of expression. He speaks of God "sending forth the spirit of his Son into our hearts, crying, Abba, Father" (Gal. 4^6). Reconciling love means the Fatherhood of God and man's sense of sonship with God. Under the Law Paul had felt himself to be but a servant of God the Legislator and Judge; now he feels himself to be a son of the God and Father of the Lord Jesus Christ: "Thou art no longer a bondservant but a son" (Gal. 4^7). Fear gives place to filial trust and confidence: "Ye received not the spirit of bondage again unto fear; but ye received the spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father" (Rom. 8^{15}). The atmosphere of the law-court is transformed into that of the home ruled by love.

Justification

This is another mode of expression to describe the experience of the reconciling love of God. It is prominent in only two of the epistles—Galatians and Romans. It occurs but once in the epistles to the Corinthians (1 Cor. 6^{11}); it does not occur at all in Thessalonians, Philippians, Colossians, Philemon, Ephesians. The absence of the word from so many of the epistles suggests that what Paul means by

justification he can express by the use of other phraseology. As it occurs in passages in which he has Jews or Judaising Christians in view, and consequently makes use of conceptions with which the Jews were familiar, we may be helped to understand what Paul means by justification if we interpret it in the light of these conceptions.

In the Judaism in whose atmosphere Paul was reared the belief was firmly held that obedience to the Law was the ground of acceptance with God in the Day of Judgment. Perfect obedience was not to be hoped for; room was left for the pardoning mercy of God. But a certain measure of obedience was indispensable. If the test were passed, God would declare the individual accepted (that is, justified), and would bestow upon him the rich inheritance He has destined for those who have found acceptance with Him. And this has also to be noted that the day of judgment was often conceived as coincident with the advent of Messiah to inaugurate the new world-order of the "new age."

It is in view of such Jewish categories that Paul uses and, in using, transforms the conception of justification. For Paul, the "new age" has already come; it was definitely inaugurated by the death and resurrection of Jesus. Acceptance with God, justification by God, is a present fact, a present experience. The blessings bestowed on the justified are a present possession—deliverance from an evil heart and an evil world, fuller fellowship with

God, eternal life, eternal blessedness. What justification stands for has indeed a vital connection with the future, but it is not relegated to a distant future; it is brought into the present, it can be experienced here and now. Further, justification as a present experience is not the divine reward for obedience to the Law, for "good works" whether perfect or imperfect; it is freely bestowed as the gift of God; it is of grace, not of merit.

2. The Man-ward Side of the New Experience

God's gracious will was the dominant factor in Paul's experience in his sudden revolution, but "the capture of the soul by God" involved the capture of Paul's own will. The two things were linked together—the overture of God to Paul, and the response of Paul to God. Had Paul not responded with his whole being—heart and mind and will—to the grace of God, he would have had no experience of the love of God shed abroad in his heart. Had he not responded to the divine ideals of goodness, he would have had no experience of the spirit of life in Christ Jesus. The loving will of God and the loyal response of Paul's own will were integral factors of one and the same experience. The loving will of God set free Paul's will to do that which he would; it was "the releasing of a compressed spring." Spiritual emotions and spiritual convictions were of course inseparable from this exercise

of the will, but the weight was upon the will, the master-power in the soul.

As for the God-ward side of his new experience, so for the man-ward side Paul has many different phrases to describe what it means. Three of these may be singled out.

Fellowship with Christ

Paul says to the Corinthians: "Ye were called into the fellowship of his Son Jesus Christ our Lord" (1 Cor. 1^{9}). This phrase suggests a personal relation to Christ, intimate and abiding—a relation such as subsists between friend and friend. Such fellowship with Christ means for Paul trustful loyal love to his Divine Friend; willingness to identify himself with the ideals of the Divine Friend, to let himself be subdued and moulded by a higher personality than his own. This conception of fellowship with Christ receives memorable expression in these words: "I live; and yet no longer I, but Christ dwelleth in me" (Gal. 2^{20}). And also in a favourite phrase of his which might well stand for his motto—"in Christ." "As the air we breathe is in us and fills us, and we at the same time live and breathe in the air, so it is with the Christ-fellowship of the apostle Paul: Christ in me, I in Christ." [1]

Dying and Rising with Christ

Throughout His life on earth the spirit of Jesus had such complete dominance over the flesh (all

[1] Deissmann, *Paulus*, p. 87.

that belongs to the evil side of human nature) that He can be said to have been dead to sin, to have died to sin. Death to sin is equivalent to the complete dominance of the spirit: these are two sides of one and the same spiritual reality. In His death on the Cross was the supreme manifestation of His death to sin. Not only so, but when He died on the Cross He was done with the earthly life in which, "in the likeness of sinful flesh," He was brought into contact with the allurements and consequences of sin ("He died unto sin once for all" —Rom. 8[10]); and by His resurrection the life of the spirit gained a fuller and wider manifestation. So Paul makes use of the death and resurrection of Jesus as symbols of what it means to respond to God's overture in Christ—this, namely, to have fellowship with Christ in the dominance of the spirit over the flesh.[1]

Faith

The two phrases "the fellowship of his Son Jesus Christ our Lord" and "dying and rising with

[1] There has been much speculation in recent years as to how Paul came to speak of "dying and rising with Christ"—a peculiarly Pauline phrase, which occurs nowhere else in the New Testament than in the Pauline epistles. Do we need to go beyond his own intense concentration on the death and resurrection of Jesus for the explanation? It is possible—though this has by no means been established—that he was influenced here by his knowledge of the use of somewhat similar phraseology in some of the mystery cults. What is certain is, that his spiritual experience, described by this phrase, owes nothing to any such foreign source.

Christ" throw light upon what Paul means by faith. Faith is a word which he uses in several different senses. The deepest sense in which he uses it is indicated by the way in which in one passage he equates it with life in Christ. "I live; and yet no longer I, but Christ liveth in me; and that life which I now live in the flesh I live in faith, the faith which is in the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself up for me" (Gal. 2^{20}). Such faith is no mere assent to doctrines about Christ nor a mere acceptance of His teaching and example; it is an identification with Christ in heart and mind and will; it is a personal relation to Christ which involves a renewal of the whole personality. The relation of faith to good works —the fruits of the spirit as contrasted with the "works of the Law"—is therefore no problem for Paul. Faith *is* moral renewal, not merely a preliminary of moral renewal. Faith and goodness are an inseparable unity. It is in good works that faith, the faith which justifies, reveals itself. If faith does not thus reveal itself, if it is powerless for goodness, and for goodness of exceptional sweep and virility, it is a mere nullity, a "dead" thing.[1]

[1] "Faith is striving, and striving is faith. The whole conscious being is concerned: there is not merely the cognition of what is, there is also an appreciation of what it is worth, a sense of the promise and potency of further good that it may unfold; there is a yearning to realise this; and there is finally the active endeavour that such feeling prompts."—Professor James Ward, *The Realm of Ends*, p. 449.

The new experience which came to Paul in his sudden revolution, and which was being deepened and strengthened in all the years of his strenuous activity, was that which gave his life its worth and meaning. It is here that we find the inspiration of his manifold labours and the secret of the wealth of his fruitful Christian thinking. And Paul has never done testifying to whom he owes this new experience which is ever stirring him to thanksgiving and thrilling him with abounding joy. It has all come to him through Christ Jesus, not through a Christ of Jewish apocalyptic imagination, but through the Jesus of history, of whose life and teaching and death he had come to have knowledge, and the power of whose resurrection he had felt in his own heart.

CHAPTER VI

THE APOSTLE TO THE GENTILES

The ethical monotheism of the prophets of Israel had "the promise and potency" of a universal religion. By their insistence upon the righteous will of God and upon the demand of God for righteous acts and righteous character from those who would render Him acceptable service, their religion "was on the very point of spreading its wings to pass beyond the boundaries of Jewish nationality." [1] They were dominated by the conviction that God had a gracious purpose to work out with the Gentiles through Israel. "I will also," so one of them represents God as addressing Israel, "give thee for a light to the Gentiles, that thou mayest be my salvation unto the ends of the earth" (Isaiah 49^6). The later Judaism held fast by this conviction of the prophets, however far it may have fallen below the height of their vision.

As a Pharisee Paul seems to have been impressed with the idea of the divine mission of Israel to the Gentile world. He may even then have brooded over

[1] Kuenen, *Hibbert Lectures*, p. 166.

words of the prophets which he was afterwards to quote in the epistle to the Romans (Rom. $9^{25, 26}$; 10^{20}; 15^{9-12}). Brought up amongst Gentiles, he was in daily contact with the life they lived. He knew their spiritual needs, and he knew something of their aspirations after higher things. The problem of the Gentile world lay upon his heart as a "concern" of his own. He may have asked himself in his early years what he could do personally to solve the problem. We do not know whether in Tarsus and elsewhere he was prominent as a propagandist of the Jewish faith, but he must at any rate have been cognisant of the influence which the synagogue was exercising upon the Gentiles. Attached closely or more loosely to the synagogue were a number of earnest-minded Gentiles. As we have already indicated, some of them had become proselytes to the Jewish faith—that is, had taken upon themselves the whole "yoke" of the Jewish Law; while others, more numerous perhaps than the proselytes, were content to go no further than to be "God-fearers"—that is, to frequent the synagogue for the sake of the lofty ideals of ethical monotheism with which it was identified, but to shrink from accepting circumcision and similar customs. In contact with the Gentile proselytes and "God-fearers" who found in the synagogue a congenial atmosphere, Paul could not help taking note of what in the Jewish faith specially attracted Gentiles, and also of what was a special stumbling-block to

them. There were broad-minded Jews of the Dispersion who were disposed to minimise precepts of the Law about merely national customs, and to lay more weight upon those aspects of the Jewish faith which made a strong appeal to a Gentile in quest of a worthy conception of God and a worthy standard of the sanctity of family life. Paul was not one of these broad-minded Jews. He may have heard the question mooted: "Are the treasures of piety and morality" which lie stored for the Gentiles in the Jewish faith to be "sacrificed to rigid legalism?"[1] If he did, he must have brushed the question aside, not perhaps without some inward disturbance, but without hesitation. In view of his broad-mindedness as a Christian, it might at first sight seem natural that he should at least have entertained the question. But we have to take into account the strength of his conviction that the whole Law, written and oral, was imposed upon the Jews by the authority of God Himself. He had due regard to what broad-minded Jews reckoned the weightier matters of the Jewish faith, but for him all the parts of the Law were covered by the same divine authority, and demanded the same scrupulous observance. It was therefore impossible for him to listen to any compromise in regard to what were supposed to be the less weighty matters of the Law, even for the sake of what was dear to him—the winning of the Gentiles to the Jewish faith. Loyalty

[1] Kuenen, *Hibbert Lectures*, p. 229.

to God and to God's Law blocked the way. It was a painful position in which he found himself.

From that painful position he was delivered when "it was the good pleasure of God to reveal his Son in him." In that hour he discovered that the true ideal of goodness was not obedience to the Law, but the inspiration of love, "the spirit of life in Christ Jesus." His new experience flashed new light upon the problem of the Gentile world. If a good heart is the only secret of a good life, how marvellously were cleared away the obstacles in the way of Gentiles who were looking towards the Jewish faith for help to live a higher religious and ethical life! The Law, as interpreted by the scribes and by Paul the Pharisee, had been to many of them a forbidding barrier. Now that it was thrown down for himself by the power of the spirit of life in Christ Jesus, the way was opened up for Gentiles whose spiritual needs lay heavy upon his heart. From the hour of his sudden revolution to the end of his life he linked these two things together—the preaching of Christ, the true exponent of the Jewish faith, to the Gentiles, and the ending of the Law as the ideal of a good life. "Christ redeemed us from the curse of the Law," he says to the Galatians, "that upon the Gentiles might come the blessing of Abraham in Christ Jesus" (Gal. $3^{14, 15}$).

Paul's call to be an apostle to the Gentiles was an immediate outcome of his initial experience of the spirit of life in Christ Jesus. That is clearly

indicated in his own account of it. "When it was the good pleasure of God . . . to reveal his Son in me, that I might preach him among the Gentiles; immediately I conferred not with flesh and blood" (Gal. $1^{15, 16}$). Later events and experiences may have thrown further light on the meaning of this call, but the call itself was not the slowly reached result of what the subsequent years taught him. It came to him in a flash in the hour of his sudden revolution.

The call came to him through the grace of God (Gal. 1^{15}). From his very birth God had been shaping his whole life to prepare him for preaching Christ to the Gentiles. His close contact with the Gentile world, his knowledge of its condition, his sympathetic interest in Gentile men and women, his longing to be their spiritual helper—God's grace was behind all that, and more manifestly was God's grace behind the new experience through which he discovered how amazingly the barrier between Jew and Gentile had been broken down. His keen sense of a service waiting to be done for God and his fellows, and of a special equipment for him in rendering this service, issued in the conviction that here there was a call from God. This was his authorisation for undertaking the work of an apostle, and of an apostle to the Gentiles, as he is at pains to make clear in his outspoken letter to the Galatians. Judaising Christians from Jerusalem had done their utmost to persuade his converts in Galatia that they

could not be true Christians unless in defiance of the teaching of their founder they submitted themselves to the yoke of the Jewish Law. One special argument they plied in their attack upon Paul. No one, they argued, could be a true apostle of Christ unless he had been duly authorised by the original apostles, and Paul could lay claim to no such authorisation. It is in reply to this attack that Paul, speaking out of a burning heart, tells the story of his call to be an apostle of Christ to the Gentiles. Not only does he admit that his apostleship had not behind it the authorisation of the Twelve, but he cites fact after fact to make it clear that his call to be an apostle was absolutely independent of such authorisation. He had a higher authorisation than could be given him by any body of men, however privileged they might be through their personal connection with Jesus in the days of His flesh. His call came directly from God Himself through his own experience of the grace of God in Christ, through the revelation of God's Son in him. He asked no other authorisation; he needed none.

But though he did not dream of looking to the original apostles for his authority to do the work of an apostle to the Gentiles, his sympathy and his agreement with them were deep and wide. The bond of union was the new life, which had come to him and them alike, though in different ways. In disputing with Peter at Antioch, Paul could take for granted that both of them acknowledged their

debt to Jesus Christ for justification; that is, for the new relation to God, which carried with it a higher kind of goodness, a closer fellowship with God, and a life that was eternal life. "We believed on Christ Jesus that we might be justified by faith in Christ, and not by the works of the law" (Gal. 2^{16}).

Even as to the relation of Christians to the Jewish Law there was no such fundamental difference between Paul and the original apostles as has been often alleged. It was impossible for men who had been companions and disciples of Jesus in His public ministry to attach fundamental importance to the observance of the Law as interpreted by the scribes. Jesus may have conformed in many directions to the customs of His people, but the whole drift of His life and teaching was towards revolutionising the current estimate of the Law. It was because the Pharisees recognised this that their suspicions were aroused from the very beginning of His ministry, and that their hostility grew more and more bitter till at last they brought the enemy of the Law to the Cross. The twelve disciples lived for long months in the atmosphere of this conflict between Jesus and the Pharisees about the Law. They knew that their Master's attitude to the Law was the cause of the tragedy of Calvary. Before His death they sided with their Master against the Pharisees; after His death they were found still siding with their Master against the Pharisees. It is therefore inconceivable that men who had had

experiences such as theirs should have attached fundamental importance to the observance of the Jewish Law by Christians.

Some twenty years after the crucifixion of Jesus there did emerge questions about the Law for discussion between Paul on the one side and James [1] and Cephas and John on the other side. There was agreement on this point, that the Jewish Law was not to be imposed on Paul's Gentile converts. There was some difference of opinion as to how far Jewish Christians were to ignore Jewish customs for the sake of securing that Gentile Christians should have full fellowship with Jewish Christians in "the breaking of bread" and in ordinary social life. There may also have been some difference of opinion as to how far, apart from the question of their relation to Gentile converts, it was wise for Jewish Christians to ignore national customs. Paul's peculiar experience under the Law qualified him to be here the foremost apologist for Christian freedom. The other apostles had probably been reared in a freer atmosphere than that of the strictest Judaism, and had not themselves been acutely conscious of the bondage of the Law. Paul, on the other hand, had identified himself with Judaism in its most rigid, uncompromising form, and had had poignant

[1] Not the son of Zebedee, but the brother of Jesus, who had not become a disciple till after the resurrection, and had therefore missed much which the twelve disciples gained from their companionship with the Master.

experience of the unrest and despair to which it had brought him. After his amazing experience in the hour of his sudden revolution he could not but set the spirit of life in Christ Jesus sharply over against the Law. He could not but be more jealous about the intrusion of the Law into the realm of the Christian life than apostles who had become followers of Jesus along other lines. But between him and them there was no fundamental difference about the relation of Christians to the Jewish Law. In his controversy, however, with the Judaising Christians, who gave him sore trouble for many a year, there was a quite vital issue at stake.

Paul and the original apostles understood each other; they acknowledged each other as sharers in the same Christ-inspired life and as fellow-workers in the service of the same Lord. But he was not dependent on the original apostles for his call to be an apostle to the Gentiles, nor for the line he took in fulfilling his vocation. All that had its independent root in his personal experience of the grace of God.

This personal experience was the prime factor in his equipment for his apostolic career. He carried with him into his work "the treasures of Jewish religion and morality," the traditional lore of the rabbinical schools, and some knowledge of Gentile ways of thinking, but it was Christ and what Christ stood for—"the things of Christ"—he put in the forefront. He was a preacher of Christ, "an

apostle of Jesus Christ," " a servant of Jesus Christ," " an ambassador on behalf of Christ." What he aimed at was to bring the Gentiles to be sharers in the great experience which had come to himself through Jesus ; to be sharers in his own experience of the good life inspired by the spirit of life in Christ Jesus, and of the life of trustful fellowship with the gracious God who had made known His heart and will towards men in His Son. His message was centred, not in doctrines about duty and God after the fashion of a Stoic missionary, but in a personality in whose life, and especially in whose death, higher conceptions of duty and God had been lived out than Stoics had dreamed of. He reminds the Galatians how, on his first visit, " before their eyes Jesus Christ was openly set forth crucified " (Gal. 3^1). Though in his letters—written, let it be remembered, to those who were already Christians—there are not many references so explicit as this to the picture he drew of the personality of Jesus in his preaching, he could not well have delivered his message without telling at some length who this Jesus was whom he preached. It is true that in his letters it is on the death and resurrection of Jesus the emphasis is laid, but it is difficult to conceive how the significance of these central facts could be understood by hearers, not yet Christians, without more or less full knowledge of the life and teaching of Jesus.

Behind Paul's message, illumining it, making it a

real thing, was the messenger. In the light of their knowledge of what Paul was his Gentile hearers could the more readily understand the story of the life and death and abiding presence of Jesus; the story of the love for His fellows by which the life and death of Jesus were inspired; the story of His revelation of a gracious God; the story of His gift to men of new life—victory over sin, heroic goodness, filial trust in the Unseen Power, peace of heart, joy in tribulation, unconquerable hope. The preaching of Christ by a messenger in whose own life the life of Jesus was so faithfully reflected may well have been "in demonstration of the spirit and of power" (1 Cor. 2^4).

III

PAUL THE INTERPRETER OF JESUS

If Paul's initial Christian experience was dependent on his knowledge of the historical Jesus and His teaching, the presumption is that his own teaching will be a reflection of the mind of Jesus. To show that this presumption is well grounded is the main purpose of this second section of our study. We therefore concentrate attention on the aspects of Paul's teaching, in which he is the interpreter of Jesus. There are some things in his teaching for which he is indebted not to Jesus, but to the rabbinical Judaism in which he was reared. They come in incidentally, and have a quite subordinate importance for himself; they are not the big thing which fascinate him and stir him into thanksgiving and joy.

CHAPTER VII

THE PLACE OF GOODNESS IN THE RELIGIOUS LIFE

No one questions that Jesus gives to goodness a sovereign place. In the largest collection of His sayings in the Gospel according to St Matthew—the collection commonly spoken of as the Sermon on the Mount—goodness is the principal theme. At the close of His sayings the Teacher clenches His appeal with these words: "Every one therefore which heareth these words of mine, and doeth them, shall be likened unto a wise man, which built his house upon the rock: and the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house; and it fell not: for it was founded upon the rock. And every one that heareth these words of mine, and doeth them not, shall be likened unto a foolish man, which built his house upon the sand: and the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and smote upon that house; and it fell: and great was the fall thereof" (Matt. 7^{24-27}).

Here, it is alleged, there is a great contrast between Paul and the Master. We are asked to compare the Sermon on the Mount with the Pauline epistles. We are told [1] that in the one the teacher is moving

[1] Wrede, *Paulus*, p. 93.

in the sphere of ethics, while in the other the teacher is moving in the sphere of theology. In the one what is demanded is goodness of life, but in the other the acceptance of theological doctrines. What Jesus is concerned with is that man should yield himself wholly and unreservedly to God and God's will: so His teaching has predominatingly the note of an ethical appeal. What Paul is concerned with is a great scheme of divine deeds transacted in the supernatural world, and what he demands as the condition of salvation is faith in these divine deeds—the incarnation, death, and resurrection of a "heavenly being." Paul has thus in his interpretation of Christianity shifted the emphasis from goodness of life, where Jesus put it, to theological doctrine, and in so shifting the emphasis has been unfaithful to the Christianity of Christ, or, in the language of another [1] of Paul's critics, has "corrupted" the Christianity of Christ.

It is also in many quarters almost taken for granted that Paul is largely responsible for the interpretation of Christianity which regards it as more concerned with escape from the penal consequences of sin in the future, than with the attainment of goodness here and now—an interpretation of Christianity in which goodness is certainly not ignored, but is not assigned a sovereign place.

That Paul assigned to goodness a secondary place, in comparison with belief in theological doctrines or with escape from the penal consequences of sin,

[1] Von Hartmann.

is an allegation which cannot be brought into harmony with the facts.

If we have read aright the fragment of autobiography in the seventh chapter of the epistle to the Romans, his chief concern, even when he was a Pharisee, was how to be a good man. If we have read aright his account of what took place in his inner life when God revealed His Son in him, it was the discovery of a new ideal of goodness and the experience of a new power to be loyal to the ideal. And he set himself to be loyal to the new ideal of goodness, which had come to him through Jesus Christ, with as resolute and persistent will-force as he had put forth to be a good man under the Law. Christ had laid His power upon him (" apprehended him ") that he might be a sharer in Christ's life. In the strength of that conviction he laboured and struggled through all the after days. When he could speak of himself as " Paul the aged " it was still his chief concern how to be a good man as Jesus was ; how to know the fellowship of His sufferings, how to be conformed to the love by which His death was inspired. " I press on, if so be that I may apprehend that for which also I was apprehended by Christ Jesus. Brethren, I count not myself yet to have apprehended : but one thing I do, forgetting the things which are behind, and stretching forward to the things which are before, I press on toward the goal unto the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus " (Phil. 3^{12-14}).

This passion for goodness breaks out and burns in every letter we have from Paul's pen. Its fire glows in one passionate appeal after another to his readers to fix their heart and will on goodness, and on no mere commonplace goodness but a heroic kind of goodness, whose "immortal garland is to be run for, not without dust and heat." A classical scholar, who finds that a passion for morality is very subordinate in some of the greatest of the Greeks, asks us to contrast the strength of this passion in St Paul: "Turn to the close of one of his epistles. One on the heels of the other, his precepts come tumbling out, breaking impetuously into questions, reinforced by quotations, by adjurations, by appeals to his personal experience, by prayers, by tears — a passionate hunger for righteousness, a passionate indignation against those who frustrate it. He overflows in enthusiastic indignation. Christ can have no concord with Belial." [1]

So axiomatic does it seem to Paul that goodness is *the* thing on which a Christian has to concentrate thought and effort, that he is simply struck with amazement when he discovers that some of his converts are turning his message about the grace of God in Jesus Christ into an excuse for slackness in the struggle to be good. They are attracted by the atmosphere of the Christian society of which they are members, by its abounding joy and hope,

[1] R. W. Livingstone, *The Greek Genius and its Meaning to Us*, p. 26.

by its brotherliness, by its high-strung spiritual emotion. All that is a great and delightful boon, in which they rejoice, for which they give thanks to God. They are attracted especially by one aspect of the Apostle's message—the abounding grace of God towards sinners. "Why worry," they are disposed to say to themselves, "about this and the other moral failure, when we have to do with so gracious a God?"

Paul, who had been too readily taking for granted that his converts had something at least of his own passion for goodness, turns upon them with disturbing questions: "Shall we sin," he asks, "because we are under grace? God forbid" (Rom. 6^{15}). He tells them that they are ignoring the very meaning of their becoming members of the Christian society. "Are you ignorant that all we who were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death?" (Rom. 6^{3}). To be a Christian was to be identified with the Spirit of Christ, to have Christ's attitude to sin and goodness, to die to sin like Jesus, and to rise with Jesus into the new life of goodness. "Our old man was crucified with him, that the body of sin might be done away, that so we should no longer be in bondage to sin . . . that we also might walk in newness of life" (Rom. $6^{6, 4}$). This newness of life was the very thing God had in view when He manifested His grace in Jesus Christ. It was not to let men off with their moral failures, but to make new men of them according to the likeness of Jesus.

Paul's teaching on the grace of God tends not to encourage moral slackness but to intensify moral strenuousness. And the same is true of his teaching on the faith that justifies. That only is justifying faith which involves union of spirit with Christ, loyalty to Christ's ideals of life, and a never-ending struggle to make these ideals effective in every sphere of thought and activity. A striving after goodness is not merely one of the results of faith, it belongs to the essence of faith. In its absence faith is no longer the faith which justifies.

It is in keeping with this prominence of the ethical appeal which Paul is ever making to his readers that he should make the divine estimate and the final issue of a man's life turn upon goodness. He never relaxes his protest against justification by "works"—external obedience to legal precepts. Nor does he ever cease to magnify the grace of God in Christ and the supreme worth of that faith which means fellowship with Christ. At the same time there is no single word of his which suggests that the divine estimate of a man's life does not turn upon goodness. What he says to the Corinthians is the expression of a dominant conviction: "For we must all be made manifest before the judgment-seat of Christ; that each one may receive the things done in the body, according to that which he hath done, whether it be good or bad" (2 Cor. 5^{10}). He views his own life in the light of this conviction. "I count all things to be loss for the excellency of the know-

ledge of Christ Jesus my Lord . . . that I may be found in him, not having a righteousness of my own, even that which is of the law, but that which is through the faith of Christ, the righteousness (goodness) which is of God by faith" (Phil. $3^{8,9}$). It is in the light of this conviction that he contemplates, if but for a moment, the possibility of failing to meet this test of his worth in the sight of God. In reminding the Corinthians how he had braced himself to tread the way of Christ-like goodness by renouncing his right to be supported by the Christian community, and by toiling at manual labour to gain his own livelihood, he concludes with these words: "I bruise my body (by my toil) and bring it into bondage: lest by any means, after that I have preached to others, I myself should be rejected" (1 Cor. 9^{27}). The Parousia (the coming) of Christ, or the Day of Christ as Paul often speaks of it, was associated with the final estimate by God of a man's worth. Again and again he reminds his readers that goodness will then be the divine test. "May your spirit and soul and body be preserved entire, without blame, at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ" (1 Thess. 5^{23}); "that ye may be sincere and void of offence unto the day of Christ" (Phil. 1^{10}); "that ye be unreprovable in the day of our Lord Jesus Christ" (1 Cor. 1^{8}). So little did Paul keep the interests of goodness in the background; so little is the atmosphere of the Pauline epistles different from that of the Sermon on the Mount.

But the question is still pressed: Is there not in the Pauline epistles a vast amount of theologising about justification by faith, election, predestination, the origin of sin, and other similar topics about which Jesus has little or nothing to say? It must be granted that Paul does theologise—and theologise to some purpose. But Paul's theologising is ancillary to goodness. In the first eleven chapters of the epistle to the Romans there is a good deal of theologising, but the first sentence in the twelfth chapter indicates that in all this theologising he has in view its bearing upon ethical life. "I beseech you *therefore*, brethren, by the mercies of God"—the main theme of what he has written up to this point—"to present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, which is your reasonable service" (Rom. 12^1). In expounding what this "reasonable service" is he takes us into the atmosphere of the Sermon on the Mount: in the twelfth chapter we have an echo of the very phraseology of the Sermon on the Mount.

Let it also be noted once again that in what he has to say about justification and faith he puts ethical interests in the forefront. In the epistle to the Galatians he is pleading for a higher kind of goodness than obedience to the Jewish Law. "For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision availeth anything nor uncircumcision; but faith working through love" (Gal. 5^6). Obedience to the Jewish Law is nothing in comparison with that love which is the fulfilling

of the law (in the sense of the divine ideal of goodness) (Gal. $5^{13, 14}$). Love is the chief thing. It is love which Paul has in view when he speaks of the spirit as the secret of the Christian life—the spirit whose fruit is love, joy, peace, long-suffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, meekness, self-control (Gal. $5^{22, 23}$). It is in the defence of this higher kind of goodness he introduces the Jewish category of justification, and in his use of it radically transforms it.[1]

It would seem, then, that there is no good ground for the allegation that Paul magnifies theological doctrine at the expense of ethical interests. As little ground is there for the allegation that Paul is responsible for less importance being attached to the attainment of goodness here and now than to escape from the penal consequences of sin in the future. As a Pharisee, his chief concern, as we have already noted, was not how to be safe,[2] but how to be a good man, and that temper he carried with him into his Christian days. He is keenly alive to the havoc sin brings in its train. If he says little, as compared with theologians in later Christian centuries, about future suffering as the penal consequence of sin, he uses words of the utmost gravity about the moral deterioration and the ruin—the

[1] See Chapter V. p. 97.

[2] Contrast a passage in Newman's *Apologia*, where he is speaking of the days when he was contemplating secession to the Church of Rome: "The simple question is, Can *I* (it is personal, not whether another, but can *I*) be saved in the English Church? Am *I* in safety, were I to die to-night," p. 231, new ed.

eternal ruin—which is the inevitable consequence of sin; he speaks of it as the "wrath of God"—the expression of divine indignation against sin. The penal consequences of sin he has in view are no arbitrary penalties from which escape is possible by a mere *fiat* of the Judge. They are so organically bound up with the sin that escape from them is only possible by escape from the sin itself. "Whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap. For he that soweth unto his own flesh shall reap corruption; but he that soweth unto the Spirit shall of the Spirit reap eternal life" (Gal. $6^{7, 8}$). As the issue of the life of the spirit, of the good life which springs from union with the spirit of Christ, is life eternal, so the issue of sin, of life to the flesh, is death, eternal ruin. With such a view of the penalty of sin as the organic and therefore inevitable consequence of sin, it was impossible for Paul to be more concerned about escape from the penal consequences of sin in the future than about redemption from sin itself in the present.

CHAPTER VIII

LAW OR SPIRIT

Goodness may be conceived either as the observance of moral rules or as the inspiration of a good heart. Such observance and such inspiration are not wholly independent of each other. The observance of rules may be a help in fostering the goodness which wells up from within,[1] as, on the other hand, this kind of goodness may find expression in helpful rules. But so much stress may be laid on the observance of rules that the interests of a higher kind of goodness are thrust into the background. The ethical standard comes to be lowered. Goodness is regarded as merely correct moral conduct, conformity to the conventional usages of the community, "cold morality." Against such a conception of what a good life means protests are raised. There is impatience with mere respectability; a thirst for what "exceeds duty and outstrips requirement," for the kind of goodness which irradiates the lives of the hero and the saint. The highest goodness, it is urged, is never reached till general rules can be dispensed with, and their place taken

[1] "The rule from without is met by the greeting from within." —E. Caird, *The Evolution of Greek Theology*, i. 73.

by the inspiration of the individual soul. The great saying of St Augustine commands assent: "Love and do what thou will."

The teaching of Jesus is one long protest against the conception of goodness as the mere observance of rules. That was the conception of the Pharisees, and this is the judgment passed upon it by Jesus: "Except your righteousness shall exceed the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees, ye shall in no wise enter into the Kingdom of God" (Matt. 5^{20}). So He insists upon going behind the outward action to the motive which prompts it. "Do men gather grapes of thorns or figs of thistles? . . . A good tree cannot bring forth evil fruit; neither can a corrupt tree bring forth good fruit" (Matt. $7^{16, 18}$). "Out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh. The good man out of his good treasure bringeth forth good things . . . and the evil man out of his evil treasure bringeth forth evil things" (Matt. $12^{34, 35}$). So Jesus passes beyond the conventional standards of social duty: "Love your enemies, and pray for them that persecute you; that ye may be sons of your Father which is in heaven: for he maketh his sun to rise on the evil and the good, and sendeth rain on the just and the unjust. For if ye love them that love you, what reward have you? do not even the publicans the same? And if ye salute your brethren only, what do ye more than others? do not even the Gentiles the same?" (Matt. 5^{43-47}).

Paul was qualified by his exceptional experience to draw out the contrast between the two ideals of goodness. As a Pharisee he had bent all the strength of his will to observe the manifold rules of the written and oral Law. The result of all this persistent struggle was despair and misery. The observance of rules issued in the cry: "O wretched man that I am!" (Rom. 7^{24}); as he puts it in a vivid metaphor, it "slew him" (Rom. 7^{11}). Then there suddenly came to him his experience of the spirit of life in Christ Jesus. He was upborne on the tide of a mighty love; he found a new and amazing power to back him up in his struggle to be a good man. The secret of his new life was the inspiration of a good heart. Henceforward this was his watchword: "Spirit *versus* Law." "The letter (the law) killeth, but the spirit giveth life" (2 Cor. 3^{6}).

We have here the ruling idea in the whole of Paul's ethical teaching. We single out six phases of his teaching in which the conception of goodness as the outflow from an inner life is prominent.

1. Goodness is the fruiting of what is within.

As the fruit tree cannot but flower and fruit, so the inner life of the Christian cannot but express itself by "bearing fruit in every good work" (Col. 1^{10}). "Walk as children of the light (for the fruit of the light is in all goodness)" (Eph. $5^{8, 9}$). In the epistle to the Galatians the excellences of the Christian character are not associated with obedience

to the Law; it is indeed rather suggested that they are beyond the ambit of the Law: "The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faithfulness, meekness, self-control: *against such there is no law*" (Gal. $5^{22, 23}$) (May these concluding words mean: in some kind of opposition to the Law, but not forbidden by the Law?). This conception of goodness as the fruit of an inner life involves emphasis upon its root in a good heart; it withdraws attention from external obedience towards the inner life.

2. Paul's use of the indicative mood, where we might naturally expect the imperative, is instructive.

Instead of telling his readers what they *ought to be*, he begins by telling them what they *are*. "Our old man was crucified with Christ" (Rom. 6^{6}). "They that are in the flesh cannot please God. But ye are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, since the Spirit of God dwelleth in you" (Rom. $8^{8, 9}$ M.). It is on what they already *are* that he grounds his appeal to his readers to become what they *ought to be*. He takes for granted that they have a treasury of inward life on which they can draw; an inner self inspired by the Spirit of Christ, which is waiting for due expression. The indicative mood is really the imperative mood, handled in a singularly persuasive way. This is the pith of its appeal: Become what you are. The good life means living out what is already there, the good fruit of the good tree, the expression in action of the Christ-inspired

self. Let, then, what you *are* come to its rights by your becoming what you *ought to be*.

3. Life in the spirit is the secret of victory in the moral struggle.

Some of Paul's expressions seem to suggest that moral progress is an inevitable and unimpeded growth, that it is nothing more than the spontaneous flowering and fruiting of the inner life. Here speaks the idealist, but great idealist though he be, he never loses touch with the realities, the grim realities of Christian experience. He knows that there are forces warring against the ideal, which have to be fought down. "The flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh; for these are contrary the one to the other" (Gal. 5^{17}); he knows how urgent is the need for "a dead heave of the will." He uses imagery which is startling in its boldness; he speaks of "crucifying the flesh" (Gal. 5^{24}), of mortifying (putting to death) "your members which are upon the earth" (Col. 3^{5})—imagery which has been thus expanded by Horace Bushnell: "To tear yourself from yourself . . . to thrust yourself under your heel, and make a general smash of yourself, and be all more truly yourself for this smashing and self-annihilation—this is the work before you." [1]

Will-force, continuous will-force, is an integral factor of moral progress; it is through the exercise of will-force that the way is prepared for the in-

[1] *Life and Letters of Horace Bushnell*, p. 519.

crease of the life of the spirit. The will-force which Paul as a Pharisee put forth in his struggle to be a good man was not without its bearing on his experience of the spirit of life in Christ Jesus when God revealed His Son in him. In all the after years it was through the exercise of will-force that his advances in the life of the spirit were secured and added to. It is ever in the thick of the moral conflict, with its demand for will-force, that the good life has its best chance of coming into being.

> When the fight begins within himself,
> A man's worth something. God stoops o'er his head,
> Satan looks up between his feet—both tug—
> He's left, himself, in the middle: the soul awakes
> And grows.[1]

But however indispensable for victory in the moral conflict will-force may be, Paul finds the ultimate secret of victory in an ever-increasing measure of the life of the spirit. If he summons his readers to do battle against the "flesh" ("that element in a man's nature which is opposed to goodness and works for evil"), his last word is: "Walk by the Spirit, and ye shall not fulfil the lust of the flesh" (Gal. 5^{16}). This secret of victory was disclosed to Paul with exceptional vividness in his initial Christian experience. The new life which then flooded his whole being carried him over the bar which blocked his way to the haven he was

[1] Browning, *Bishop Blougram.*

making for; to change the figure, the new life was a fire, in which the "flesh" could not live.

We have an echo of Paul's teaching on the secret of victory in the moral struggle in the expressive phrase we owe to Dr Thomas Chalmers—"the expulsive power of a new affection." This may be illustrated from Tennyson in the passage where King Arthur pictures with what power man's love for woman may work for lifting him into an atmosphere in which evil cannot live:

> For indeed I knew
> Of no more subtle master under heaven
> Than is the maiden passion for a maid,
> Not merely to keep down the base in man,
> But teach him high thought and amiable words,
> And courtliness and the desire of fame
> And love of truth, and all that makes a man.

For Paul, "walking by the spirit" is the only effectual weapon for beating down the worse self which keeps him back from "the good which he would do" (Rom. 7^{19}). It is "the law of the spirit of life in Christ Jesus" which alone frees him from "the law of sin." [1]

4. The spirit of life in Christ Jesus involves a deepening of the sense of individuality.

If the observance of general rules is what is chiefly aimed at, the individual sheltering behind public opinion may easily let his own distinctive self get lost in the crowd. The spirit of life, on the other

[1] "No heart is pure that is not passionate; no virtue is safe that is not enthusiastic."—Sir J. R. Seeley, *Ecce Homo*, p. 8.

hand, intensifies the sense of his individual responsibility; throws him back upon his own inner self; prompts him, no matter what public opinion may regard as sufficiently good, to be himself, to trust himself, to assert himself. He will not, indeed he cannot, dispense with the helpful influences of his social environment, but if for the moment he has to stand aloof from his neighbours, the impulse of the life of the spirit, the impulse of love, will bring him closer to his neighbours and fit him for enriching their lives more than would otherwise have been possible.

When the individual has a keen sense of responsibility for living out the inner life of the spirit, the question he puts to himself will often be, not: What is the general rule I am expected to obey? or what would others do in the circumstances? but rather this: What ought *I* to do? Whither am I pointed by my individual equipment, my individual opportunities, my individual responsibility for dealing with the situation with which *I* (not my neighbour) am confronted? Of this attitude we have an illustration in what Paul tells the Corinthians about his resolution to gain the means of livelihood by his own efforts. It was a recognised rule, a rule sanctioned by the Master, "that they which proclaim the gospel should live of the gospel" (1 Cor. 9^{14}). But this general rule does not settle for him the path of duty; his sense of individual responsibility impels him to transcend it. He is determined that his preaching of the gospel shall

not be prejudiced by any suspicion that, like many an itinerant orator in the Græco-Roman world of those days, he is chiefly concerned about the financial profit of his enterprise. He therefore resolves "not to use to the full" his "right in the gospel." That he may "gain the more" he takes to the weaver's loom, whatever may be "the buffeting of his body and bringing it into bondage" which this may entail.

The life of the spirit heightens the worth of the individual and intensifies the sense of what an individual may be and do. It is to the life of the spirit pulsing in the individual soul we owe the achievements of moral genius, moral originality, moral path-finding—the heroic and saintly achievements which rise above what is expected, which enlarge the realm of what is possible, which stir our hearts and renew our faith in human nature, which are the only guarantee of the moral progress of a society.

5. The "spirit of life in Christ Jesus" involves an ideal which ever outstrips attainment.

If the observance of general rules is the ideal, it is possible for people to flatter themselves that they have reached perfection. Such a claim can only be made by those who have not yet learned that the living out of the life of the spirit is a never-ending process.

> That low man seeks a little thing to do,
> Sees it and does it:
> This high man, with a great thing to pursue,
> Dies ere he knows it. [1]

[1] Browning, *A Grammarian's Funeral.*

The greater the attainments one makes in living out the life of the spirit, the more the ideal seems to expand. He discovers that he has to do, not with an ideal fixed and finite, but with an ideal which has infinity in its heart. To his highest efforts might be applied the words in which an appreciative critic described the art of G. F. Watts: "There is always in his work a window left open to the infinite." [1]

So for Paul, mastered by his new vision of the good life, there can no longer be any talk of finality. All that is for ever ruled out by an ideal involving "an infinity of effort with always an impossible perfection beyond it." Even when he comes to "the land's last limit"

> And all but in heaven
> Hovers the gleam,

he is still straining towards the ideal which is ever outstripping his efforts: "Not that I have already obtained, or am already made perfect: but I press on, if so be that I may apprehend that for which also I was apprehended by Christ Jesus" (Phil. 3^{12}).

6. It is in the interest of the life of the spirit that Paul makes his insistent plea for freedom.

Freedom is one of Paul's watchwords. "Where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty" (2 Cor. 3^{17}). "For ye, brethren, were called for freedom" (Gal. 5^{13}). "For freedom did Christ set us free:

[1] *Life of G. F. Watts*, i. 300.

stand fast therefore, and be not entangled again in a yoke of bondage" (Gal. 5^1).

In his criticism of J. S. Mill's essay *On Liberty*, Sir J. F. Stephen makes this remark: "Discussions about liberty are either misleading or idle, unless we know *who* wants to do *what*." [1] What Paul is concerned about is no "unblest freedom from restraint"; no mere freedom to do as one pleases, so long as others are not injured. It is freedom for the life of the spirit to express itself, freedom to "do what the higher self really wills." Very specially is it freedom for the expression of that love which is the supreme characteristic of the life of the spirit. "Use not your freedom for an occasion to the flesh, but through love be servants one to another" (Gal. 5^{13}). (Such freedom is not a disintegrating, but a uniting social force. As Luther puts it in his address on Christian Liberty: "A Christian man is the most free lord of all, and subject to none; a Christian man is the most dutiful servant of all, and subject to everyone.")

It is only when we take into account the higher kind of goodness which Paul associates with the life of the spirit that we can understand why he should set "spirit" in such sharp antithesis to "law," and why he should be so uncompromising in his attitude to the Law; in ousting the Law from the sphere of the Christian life. It is in the interest of what he

[1] *Liberty, Equality, and Fraternity*, p. 182.

reckons of supreme worth that he uses trenchant words: "Ministers of a new covenant; not of the letter but of the spirit: for the letter—the law—killeth, but the spirit giveth life. . . . If the ministration of death, written, and engraven on stones, came with glory . . . how shall not rather the ministration of the spirit be with glory?" (2 Cor. 3^{6-8}). "We have been discharged from the law . . . so that we serve in newness of the spirit, not in oldness of the letter" (Rom. 7^{6}).

When Paul is setting spirit in sharp antithesis to law, it is important to keep in view what he means by law in such passages. For he uses the word in two senses[1] in his epistles. There are passages in which law is spoken of as virtually the ethical ideal. "The law is holy and the commandment holy, and righteous, and good" (Rom. 7^{12}); "I delight in the law of God after the inward man" (Rom 7^{22}); "that the requirement of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the spirit" (Rom. 8^{4}); "love is the fulfilling of the law" (Rom. 13^{10}); "bear ye one another's burdens, and so fulfil the law of Christ" (Gal. 6^{2}); "do we then make the law of none effect through faith? God forbid: nay, we establish the law" (Rom. 3^{31}).

It is not in this large sense of the word that Paul contrasts law with spirit, but in the restricted sense which he associated with his experience as a Pharisee

[1] Indeed in more than two senses.

—a system of statutory precepts, which was imposed by an authority regarded as external to his inner self, and which demanded no more than an external obedience. Against the Law so conceived Paul has never done with his passionate protest. It was blocking the way to true goodness—the goodness which wells up from the inner self laid hold of and inspired by the spirit of Christ. And here it has to be borne in mind that in his condemnation of Law as the standard of goodness he has in view not only its precepts about Jewish ceremonies, but quite as much its precepts about moral conduct. The Law is not the standard for the moral life. To claim Paul's authority for freedom from the ceremonial law, and at the same time to invoke his authority for the continuance of the legal conceptions of Judaism in the ethical sphere, is to distort his whole teaching about the Law, and to distort it with unhappy consequences for Christian theology as well as for Christian ethics.

It is his zeal for ethical interests which stirs Paul to his extraordinary impatience with the Law. He cannot rest till he gets it out of the way. "We have been discharged from the law" (Rom. 7^{6}). "I died unto the law . . . that I might live unto God" (Gal. 2^{19}). "Ye also were made dead to the law . . . that we should bring forth fruit unto God" (Rom. 7^{4}).

This attitude to the Law Paul connects very definitely with Jesus. "Christ is the end of the

law unto righteousness" (Rom. 10^4)—the end of the Law for goodness.[1] Christ has "blotted out the bond written in ordinances, that was against us" (Col. 2^{14}); has "abolished in his flesh the enmity, even the law of commandments contained in ordinances" (Eph. 2^{15}). "Christ redeemed us from *the curse of the law*" (Gal. 3^{13}). (That means, not from penalties threatened by the Law, but from the Law as itself an accursed thing.)

The story of the life of Jesus throws light upon Paul's impatience with the Law. It was by His attitude to the Law that Jesus came into conflict with the Pharisees. Their suspicions were aroused by his persistent emphasis upon goodness of heart and upon the little importance he attached to their dearly cherished rules about the Sabbath, ritual washings, and fasts. Their hostility was increased as they saw with what freedom He associated with those who were notorious for their non-observance of one and another precept of the Law. The boldness with which He criticised themselves, the custodians of the Law and of the sacred interests which were bound up with the Law, stung them into relentless hatred of the dangerous revolutionary. Convinced that the Law would be inevitably discredited, if the career of Jesus were not speedily brought to an end, they resolved to compass His death. Jesus, in the strength of a measureless love, accepted the risks to which He was exposed. That

[1] See Chapter IV, p. 71.

His fellows might be redeemed from their sore bondage and lifted up into a life inspired by love to God and love to man, He stood ready to suffer the worst that the hatred of the representatives of the Law could wreak upon Him. "He stedfastly set his face to go to Jerusalem" (Luke 9^{51}). In Jerusalem the hatred of the scribes and Pharisees achieved its purpose. The Law succeeded in nailing Jesus to the Cross. In the Cross the conflict between the Law as the ideal of goodness and the higher ideal cherished by Jesus reached its climax. The Cross threw into relief the incompatibility of the two ideals. The Law put Jesus to death, and the death of Jesus was "the end of the law." Well might Paul say to the Galatians: "If righteousness (goodness) is through the law, then Christ died for nought" (Gal. 2^{21}). So decisively had Jesus in His death sealed the antithesis of spirit to Law.

Paul's polemic against the Law is no mere *addendum* to his Christian message; it belongs to the substance of the message. He draws a sharp distinction between the goodness "which is of the law" and the goodness "which is of God by faith" (Phil. 3^{9}). It is his sense of the immeasurable gravity of this distinction which gives edge to his teaching about justification of faith, and about the grace of God which is the ultimate source of faith. Some parts of his argument have little attractiveness for us to-day. In the working out of the allegory of Sarah and Hagar as representatives of the two

covenants, the argument itself may seem to be far-fetched and unconvincing, but that for which he is arguing is of the greatest moment—the superiority of goodness which springs from the inner life of the spirit to goodness which rises no higher than the observance of rules. By the persistence and fervour of his exposition and defence of this superiority he has made all the subsequent Christian centuries his debtors in the perennial struggle to resist the intrusion of legalism into the Church of Him who died to redeem us from the curse of the Law.

CHAPTER IX

THE SPIRIT OF LIFE IN CHRIST JESUS

The Pauline phrase, "the spirit of life in Christ Jesus," was frequently used in the preceding chapter without any attempt to inquire into its full significance. It is entitled to further consideration.

Paul could not conceive of the higher goodness, which he contrasted with obedience to the Law, apart from the power of the spirit of God, the ideal and inspirer of goodness, and more especially apart from the power of the spirit of God as manifested in Christ Jesus. In his struggle to be a good man under the Law, the thought of God's co-operation with him was in the background. God had indeed given the Law and provided outward helps for its observance; but there God stopped. God was the Legislator and Judge standing over against man and external to him, and man was left to obey the divine precepts in his own strength. For Paul, that way lay despair and wretchedness. It was in a new world he found himself when God revealed His Son in him. God was very near to him, very helpful. The power of God was with him, backing up his weak will, and giving victory to the "inward man" over the evil impulses which held him in thraldom.

This power of God at work in his heart he speaks of as the spirit of God, and as the spirit of God with a special meaning attached to the phrase, and not in the wide meaning which was commonly current among Gentiles. There were many religious cults in Greece and elsewhere, of which the fostering of religious emotion was a prominent feature. The votaries of a god such as Dionysus sought to be so possessed by the god as to feel themselves uplifted by divine power, and the wild excitement in which their religious worship issued was regarded by many a sober-minded onlooker as mad frenzy. But this experience of being possessed, inspired by the god, whatever may have been its worth in other directions, had little or no bearing on the ethical life of the worshippers. Here the interests of goodness were not bound up with the interests of religion. Paul was aware of the existence of such religious cults and of the possibility of his readers being influenced by Gentile conceptions of what was meant by the indwelling of the spirit of God. For him, the spirit of God was ever the spirit of Christ. It was through Christ there came to him his initial experience of the power of the spirit of God, and through a Christ, not of apocalyptic fancy, but a Christ who was the Jesus of history, a Christ to whom the sovereignty of goodness was what it was to the Jesus of history. He could not, therefore, think of the spirit of God apart from Christ.

So it was inevitable that Paul should identify the

spirit of God with goodness. As has been well said, he "Christianised the spirit,"[1] and in Christianising he ethicised the spirit. This Christianising of the spirit comes to decisive expression in the warning he addresses to the Corinthians against an undue exaltation—at the expense of the interests of goodness—of spiritual emotion finding vent for itself in inarticulate ecstatic utterances (speaking with tongues), in rapturous religious speech, and in the exercise of unusual power over men's bodies and minds: "If I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, but have not love, I am become sounding brass or a clanging cymbal. And if I have the gift of prophecy . . . and if I have all faith, so as to remove mountains, but have not love, I am nothing" (1 Cor. $13^{1, 2}$).

The spirit of God or the spirit of Christ means power, not his own, brought to bear upon man's will. But this power is not foreign to a man's true self; it belongs to his true self, it is the ally and helper of his true self. So Paul interpreted the power of the spirit. He never dreamed that his own individuality was being overborne by an alien power. The spirit of Christ was the secret of the amplitude and force of his Christian manhood. The more he was "Jesus Christ's man" (under the power of the spirit of Christ) so much the more was he the true Paul. The more he was another's, so much the more was he *himself*. The flowers owe much to

[1] Wernle, *Anfänge unserer Religion*, p. 161.

the sun that bathes them in the sunshine, and the more the sun does for them, so much the more distinctly may each individual plant show its own individual nature in leaf and flower and seed. So the more Paul was under the power of the spirit of Christ, so much the more strongly and to finer issues was his individuality accentuated.

The spirit of God—interchangeable with the spirit of Christ—is not the only phrase Paul uses when he speaks of the divine influence on man's heart and will. He has a phrase which is more distinctively his own. It is enshrined in his great confession to the Galatians of the secret of his Christian life: "I live, and yet no longer I, but Christ liveth in me: and that life which I live in the flesh I live in faith, the faith which is in the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself up for me" (Gal. 2^{20}). That Christ the "Dweller within" means for Paul the same thing as the spirit of God or the spirit of Christ is made quite clear in the epistle to the Romans: "Ye are not in the flesh, but in the spirit, if so be that *the Spirit of God* dwelleth in you. But if any man have not *the Spirit of Christ*, he is none of his. And if *Christ* is in you, the body is dead because of sin" (Rom. $8^{9, 10}$). This sense of Christ's abiding presence and power in his heart is an outstanding "note" of Paul's Christian experience. As has been said: "The consciousness of Jesus burns in him like a fire. It comes over

him like the wind through a tree, till every leaf is quivering." [1]

For Paul, Christ is the ever-present Divine Companion, the ever-helpful Unseen Friend; the Christian life is a life of fellowship with Christ, with God in Christ. Here we get the right point of view for appreciating what Paul has to say about the way in which the spirit of life in Christ Jesus has its outcome for the Christian in the highest kind of goodness.

Let us go back for a moment to the companionship of the Twelve with their Master in the days of His flesh. He had new lessons to teach them about God's love, and about the kind of life the Father in heaven looked for in His children; but behind all that, and giving its power to all that, was the spirit of the Teacher. It was what the Master was that made of the disciples other men than they had been. Haltingly and blunderingly they put themselves to school with Jesus. Under the spell of His personality they were being weaned from their selfish ambitions, their ignoble tempers, their poor dreams of coming good for themselves and for their nation. As they yielded themselves to be wrought upon by His spirit, "His being working in their own" transformed their inner life, attuned their spirit to His. The great thing they gained from their companionship with the Master was not new truths to teach others about God and duty, but a new spirit to

[1] Principal Rainy, *The Evangelical Succession*, i. 29.

communicate to others—the spirit of life in Christ Jesus.

This is what fellowship with Christ the Divine Companion means for Paul—a life transformed by the power of the spirit of Christ. "We all, with unveiled face, reflecting as a mirror the glory of the Lord, are transformed into the same image, from glory to glory, even as from the Lord the Spirit" (2 Cor. 3^{18}). He appeals occasionally to precepts of the Lord; but what holds his interest is not the mere teaching of Jesus, but the Teacher Himself—His character, His personality, His spirit. So it is thitherward he is ever directing his readers. "My little children," he says to the Galatians, "of whom I am again in travail, till Christ be formed in you" (Gal. 4^{19}). In pleading with the Corinthians to show a more genial temper, he beseeches them "by the meekness and gentleness of Christ" (2 Cor. 10^{1}). "God is my witness," he says to the Philippians, "how I long after you all in the tender mercies of Christ Jesus" (Phil. 1^{8}); and in the following chapter he appeals to them to "have this mind in them, which was also in Christ Jesus, who . . . being found in fashion as a man . . . humbled himself, becoming obedient unto death, yea, the death of the Cross" (Phil. 2^{5-8}). "The Lord direct you," he says to the Thessalonians, "into the love of God, and into the patience of Christ" (2 Thess. 3^{5}); and to the Ephesians: "Walk in love, even as Christ also loved you, and gave himself up for us, an offering

and a sacrifice to God for an odour of a sweet smell" (Eph. 5^2). Everywhere what he has in view is not legal obedience of any sort but a life so transformed by the spirit of Christ that it reflects the heart and will of Christ.

Paul speaks once or twice of the imitation of Christ (1 Thess. 1^6, 1 Cor. 11^1), but by the imitation of Christ he does not mean the mere outward copying of His example. The suffering Christ he conceives, not as a model for him to copy, but as the ever-present Divine Companion with whom he is to strive to be one in spirit. So he speaks of himself as striving to "know the fellowship of his sufferings" and to be "conformed unto his death" (Phil. 3^{10}); as "always bearing about in his body the dying of Jesus" (2 Cor. 4^{10}); as "united with him by the likeness of his death" (Rom. 6^5); as "buried with him through baptism unto death" (Rom. 6^4); as "crucified with Christ" (Gal. 2^{20}). The same thought he expresses in simpler phraseology when he says to the Corinthians that "the sufferings of Christ abound unto us" (2 Cor. 1^5). But what he has in view is no mere copying of the example of the suffering Christ, but fellowship with Christ in that life of love which brings suffering in its train—fellowship with Christ which means a great vision of what he may be and do for his fellows, a noble fidelity to his vocation, a heroic disregard of self in the service of others. So, as one who has learned the secret of true joy, he can say to the Colos-

sians : " I rejoice in my sufferings for your sake, and fill up that which is lacking of the afflictions of Christ in my flesh, for his body's sake, which is the Church " (Col. 1^{24}).

By his deepening of the meaning of the imitation of Christ, Paul, if he widens the freedom of the Christian man, increases at the same time his responsibility. " As the Way, Christ is meant to transform us : but the transformation is not into the fashion of Jesus of Nazareth, but into a fashion shaped out of our own materials." [1] That it was in this sense Paul interpreted loyalty to Christ as the Great Exemplar is illustrated by the fervour with which he threw himself into his mission as the preacher of Christ to the Gentiles, and in spite of violent opposition stood by his conviction that Christ was " the end of the law." Judaising Christians might have pleaded that Jesus of Nazareth confined His ministry to the lost sheep of the house of Israel and generally conformed to Jewish customs, but Paul was sure that in championing the freedom of the Gentiles from the Jewish Law he was shaping the " materials " put into his hands, in profoundest loyalty to the mind of the Master.

The foregoing study of the spirit of life in Christ Jesus suggests how inevitable it was for Paul to regard religion and morality as forming an indissoluble unity.

[1] Hort, *The Way, the Truth, the Life*, p. 205.

In the quest for a good life man is driven back upon his inner life. When he comes to his true self, he comes to God, his ally and helper in the struggle to be a good man. He discovers that it is only through a power greater than his own, the power of God who " worketh " in him " both to will and to work " (Phil. 2^{13}), that his true self is freed from the hard bonds by which his will to " do that which is good " is enthralled and reduced to impotence.

On the other hand, when the true self of a man is under the power of the spirit of God in Christ he can no longer be content with religious emotion divorced from the quest of goodness. He is committed to fall in with God's purpose that he should be conformed to " the image of his Son " ; he is committed to let his whole life be ruled by Christ's ideals of goodness.

CHAPTER X

THE SUPREMACY OF LOVE

In the three preceding chapters, in which we had under consideration Paul's interpretation of goodness, incidental reference was frequently made to the place he assigned to love in the Christian life, but this aspect of his teaching deserves fuller treatment, in view especially of the suggestion often made that Paul is not a faithful interpreter of the mind of Jesus in His teaching on the supremacy of love.

At the outset let us look at the place which love held in his own life.

As a Pharisee Paul must have had a strongly marked individuality—the kind of individuality which belongs to those who are born to be leaders of men. Conscious of his powers, he longed to turn them to a worthy account. It was by no ignoble ambition he was pricked when he resolved to do the utmost for what he deemed the highest. Likely enough, as we have already suggested, he had his dreams of the service he might render to the Jewish faith, and through the Jewish faith to the Gentile world. Sure of the surpassing worth of his Jewish faith, he gave himself to the furtherance of its interests with masterful energy. He " advanced in the

Jews' religion beyond many of his own age among his countrymen, being more exceedingly zealous for the traditions of his fathers." When the followers of Jesus of Nazareth were threatening, as he believed, to undermine the foundations on which the Jewish faith rested, he became a ringleader in the movement for their suppression. " Beyond measure he persecuted the church of God, and made havock of it " (Gal. 1^{13}).

Then there took place the sudden revolution with its experience of the love of God through His Son, and of love like that of Christ as the secret of deliverance from the bondage of his lower self. In that hour he was captured—" apprehended "—by a power not his own. The name of that power was Love. Henceforth this love was the mightiest influence in his life. The love of Christ—love like that of Christ at work in his own heart—" constrained " him (2 Cor. 5^{14}). The constraint of this love was at the heart of the heroism with which he faced the manifold hardships and heartaches of which we hear in one and another passage of his letters.

In his pre-Christian days he was interested in his Gentile neighbours, but between him and them there was a grim wall which blocked the way to effective fellowship. That wall—the Jewish Law—was broken down through his experience of the love of God in Christ. This new experience issued in the outflow of love towards the Gentiles ; of love which desired great things for those who were loved. Through Christ there had come to himself an inner life which

had made all things new, the life of faith and hope and love, and it was his ruling passion to bring the Gentiles to be sharers in his own experience. It was in this spirit he approached the Gentiles as an ambassador for Christ, and his own love-inspired life prepared the way for his message laying its power upon receptive hearts.

The spring of Paul's activity as an apostle of Christ was his own individual spiritual experience, and what he aimed at was the quickening of a similar experience in other individuals. How largely his love was an individualising love is illustrated by that short letter to Philemon which gives us a singularly interesting glimpse into the heart of the apostle. Onesimus, a slave of Philemon, has run off after defrauding his master, and has somehow found his way to Paul in prison—drawn towards the apostle perhaps by what he had learned in the Christian household of Philemon about the queer kindliness of Paul's ways. Paul's sympathy goes out to the "good for nothing" runaway and wins him. Under the spell of Paul's faith in him, of Paul's love for him, he becomes another man—a "good for something" disciple of Paul's Master. To Philemon Paul speaks of him as now "a brother beloved," as "my very heart." "If thou countest me as a partner, receive him as myself" (Philem. v. 17). To such issues does Paul's individualising love work.

There is a fine line in Lowell's *The Vision of Sir Launfal*:—

For the gift without the giver is bare.

We have here an echo of what Paul says about himself to the Thessalonians: "Being affectionately desirous of you, we were well pleased to impart unto you, not the gospel of God only, but also our own souls, because ye were become very dear to us" (1 Thess. 2^8). The people to whom he thus gives himself were once strangers to him, mostly very humble folk, some of them the flotsam and jetsam of the community, and all of them below his own level of intelligence and culture. To the Christians of Corinth, among whom there were "not many wise after the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble," he speaks in a similar strain: "Ye are in our hearts to die together and live together" (2 Cor. 7^3). So this masterful, forceful man brings to these humble Gentiles a love as tender as it is strong. "We dealt with each of you, as a father with his own children, exhorting you, and encouraging you" (1 Thess. 2^{11}). "We were gentle in the midst of you, as when a nurse cherisheth her own children" (1 Thess. 2^7).

The patience of Paul's love is disclosed to us in his treatment of members of the Galatian and Corinthian churches, who were turning against their founder.

Judaising Christians had appeared in Galatia, bent on convincing Paul's converts that they could be no true Christians unless they observed the Jewish Law, and that Paul who claimed for Gentile Christians freedom from the Jewish Law was no duly accredited apostle of Jesus Christ. When news reached Paul of the headway they were making with

their insidious *propaganda* among the Galatian Christians, he was alarmed lest all his work on their behalf should be undone. He was amazed at the fickleness of his friends and debtors. "O foolish Galatians, who did bewitch you?" (Gal. 3^{1}). "I am afraid of you, lest by any means I have bestowed labour upon you in vain" (Gal. 4^{11}). "I marvel that ye are so quickly removing from him that called you in the grace of Christ to a different gospel" (Gal. 1^{6}). He is hurt by their changed attitude towards himself. But love triumphs over any personal resentment. His one concern is to bring them back to their old allegiance. "My little children, of whom I am again in travail until Christ be formed in you, yea, I could wish to be present with you" (Gal. $4^{19, 20}$). And this "travail" is exercised in a great-hearted way. He does not scold; he is not even content with affectionate pleading. He speaks to the mind as well as to the heart of his readers. He thinks it worth while to tell them of his past life as a Pharisee and as a Christian, and so to lead them on to an intelligent appreciation of the difference between his own message of freedom from the Jewish Law and that of the Judaising Christians who have been leading them astray. It was for love's sake he wrote to those obscure, fickle, ungrateful folk the impassioned letter which is treasured as one of the masterpieces of Christian literature.

He was sorely worried, too, by an outbreak of disaffection in the church at Corinth, fomented by

Judaising Christians from Jerusalem or elsewhere. His authority as an apostle of Jesus Christ was again called in question, and his personal character was attacked. He was said to be lording it over the Corinthian Christians with his domineering temper. It was hinted that he was diverting to his own personal use money which had been entrusted to him for other purposes. As for his boast that he earned his own livelihood by the work of his hands in order that he might not be burdensome to the Christian community, what was that but a virtual acknowledgement that he had no right, as a true apostle would have had, to look to the community for his support? That is the situation with which he is dealing in the second epistle to the Corinthians, especially in 2^{14}–7^{4} and 10-13.[1] He was stung by the injustice of these attacks upon his character, and by the readiness of some of his Corinthian converts to listen to them, but here again love triumphed over personal resentment. He strove to win back his detractors in the Christian community to a better mind. To attain his object he laid bare the secret of his life, as he has done with equal frankness and fullness nowhere else; and from this point of view his detractors have made us their debtors. The key-note of his self-defence, which for poignancy

[1] J. Weiss suggests that these passages were written in a separate letter a considerable time before what we have in the rest of the "second epistle to the Corinthians."—*Das Urchristenthum*, pp. 258–272. Many New Testament scholars consider that at least Chapters X.–XIII. belong to an earlier letter.

and restraint has few parallels in literature, is struck in the appeal inspired by a virile love: "Our mouth is open to you, O Corinthians, our heart is enlarged. Ye are not straitened in us, but ye are straitened in your own affections. Now for a recompense in like kind (I speak as unto my children), be ye also enlarged. . . . Open your hearts to us: we wronged no man, we corrupted no man, we took advantage of no man. I say it not to condemn you: for I have said that ye are in our hearts to die together and live together" (2 Cor. 6^{11-13}, $7^{2, 3}$).

It was a hard school in which Paul learned to let love have its "perfect work." But he welcomed this hard school for the new lessons in love it taught him. "Wherefore I take pleasure in weaknesses, in injuries, in necessities, in persecutions, in distresses, for when I am weak, then am I strong" (2 Cor. 12^{10}). He knew that on that rough path the power of Christ, which was the love of Christ, would most surely rest upon him. From the beginning of his Christian career love had been strengthening and maturing his character. It had been his ambition to "know the fellowship of Christ's sufferings, becoming conformed unto His death," but the ideal was ever ahead of him, beckoning him to still further heights on the way of love. It is at the close of his career we find him making this confession of never-ending aspiration after a greater measure of the love of Christ than he had yet attained: "I count not myself yet to have apprehended" (Phil. 3^{13}).

Knowledge of the part which love played in his own life prepares us for a due appreciation of Paul's teaching on the supremacy of love. The ideal he sets before his readers is the ideal he lived up to, or rather, for he would have been the first to acknowledge his failures, which he strove to live up to. And his teaching here as elsewhere is in closest touch with the life of his readers. It is not part of an ethical treatise; it emerges incidentally in his handling of pressing problems in everyday life.

We single out some of his most striking references to the supreme worth of love.

Once and again he lays stress upon the trinity of graces, faith and hope and love—" and the greatest of these is love." In the opening verses of the first epistle to the Thessalonians, where he is recalling the days when he first preached the gospel to them and all that he had seen and heard of their manner of life in the days that followed, we see on what it is he concentrates as of highest worth in their life of Christian discipleship: " We give thanks to God always for you all . . . remembering without ceasing your work of faith and *labour of love* and patience of hope in our Lord Jesus Christ " (1 Thess. $1^{2, 3}$). In somewhat similar terms he begins the epistle to the Colossians: " We give thanks to God the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ . . . having heard of your faith which is in Christ Jesus, and of the *love* which ye have towards all the saints, because of the hope which is laid up for you in the heavens " (Col. 1^{3-5}).

And this trinity of graces is thrown into relief in such an exhortation as this: "Let us, since we are of the day, be sober, putting on the breast-plate of faith and *love*, and for a helmet the hope of salvation" (1 Thess. 5^{8}).

There are two passages in specifically doctrinal epistles in which love is appraised as the ethical ideal; as the fulfilment of "the requirement of the law." "Through love be servants one to another. For the whole law is fulfilled in one word, even in this: Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself" (Gal. $5^{13, 14}$). "Owe no man anything, save to love one another: for he that loveth his neighbour hath fulfilled the law. For this, Thou shalt not commit adultery, Thou shalt not kill, Thou shalt not steal, Thou shalt not covet, and if there be any other commandment, it is summed up in this word, namely, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself. Love worketh no ill to his neighbour: love therefore is the fulfilment of the law" (Rom. 13^{8-10}).

In the enumeration of the fruits of the spirit love has the first place. "The fruit of the spirit is love, joy, peace, etc." (Gal. 5^{22}).

The true meaning of freedom is freedom for love to come to its rights. "For ye, brethren, were called for freedom; only use not your freedom for an occasion to the flesh, but through love be servants one to another" (Gal. 5^{13}).

An appeal is made to the Corinthians to add love to virility: "Watch ye, stand fast in the faith, quit

you like men, be strong. Let all that ye do be done in love" (1 Cor. $16^{13, 14}$).

Paul prays for the Thessalonians that the Lord would make them "to increase and abound in love one toward another, and toward all men" (1 Thess. 3^{12}). As for love of the members of the Christian community, he reckons this to be so integral a factor of Christian discipleship, that he hands it over to their own spiritual instinct: "Concerning love of the brethren ye have no need that one write unto you: for ye yourselves are taught of God to love one another" (1 Thess. 4^{9}).

In the epistle to the Colossians there occurs an interesting phrase which suggests that for Paul everything that goes by the name of goodness or virtue gets a heightened worth when it is brought into the service of love—prudence, courage, self-control, justice, and whatever else is reckoned a moral excellence. "Put on therefore, . . . kindness, humility, meekness, long-suffering . . . and above all these things put on love, which is the bond of perfectness" (Col. 3^{12-14}).

In the epistle to the Galatians, in which justification by faith is one of the themes,[1] there is a great saying on which one of the most recent and best commentators makes this remark: "For the disclosure of the apostle's fundamental idea of religion, there is no more important sentence in the whole

[1] The main theme is the abrogation of the Jewish Law as the ideal of the good life for the Christian.

epistle, if indeed in any of the epistles "[1] This is the sentence referred to: "For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision availeth anything (that is, for righteousness in the sense of goodness), nor uncircumcision; but faith working through love" (Gal. 5^6).

The stray passages we have quoted from various epistles prepare us for what Paul has to say about the supremacy of love in the thirteenth chapter of First Corinthians.

As a mere piece of literature this chapter is singularly arresting; all the more that nothing was further from Paul's thoughts than a concern for fine writing. It argues a remarkable command of fitting Greek words to express what is in his mind, and a remarkable gift for so arranging his material as to make his appeal effective. Throughout there is simplicity, dignity, terseness, sinewy strength. In its swing and rhythm, in its passion and compression and beauty, it is an outburst which reminds us of the very noblest poetry.

The chapter has behind it the experience of long years; it is the focussing of this experience. It is no momentary unaccountable flash of spiritual genius; it is a luminous expression of permanent and regnant convictions.

It need not therefore surprise us that this "hymn in praise of love" comes into the epistle quite incidentally. It is not a chapter in a tractate on virtue; it is not a record of meditations; it is not

[1] Burton in *The International Critical Commentary*, p. 279.

the concluding appeal in a rounded eloquent address. It is simply a part of Paul's handling of matters which were disturbing the peace and unity of the Christian community in Corinth. Troubles have arisen about the relative worth of various "spiritual" gifts, such as "speaking with tongues" (ecstatic and unintelligible utterances of exceptionally emotional worshippers) and "prophecy" (the gift of edifying the Christian community by inspired but intelligible speech). This and the other member of the community is pressing for larger opportunities of exercising his special gift in the meeting for common worship, and is showing lack of thoughtfulness about other members having opportunities for the exercise of their special gifts. So friction ensues; jealousies and heart-burnings are engendered. There is grave danger of disastrous consequences for the peace and well-being of the little Christian community. It is in view of such a situation, and with his eye also upon other matters with which he is dealing in this epistle, that he breaks away for the moment from the special line of argument he has been pursuing, and concentrates the attention of his readers on that supreme excellence of Christian character which is the true secret of concord and peace. "And a still more excellent way show I unto you"—the way of love which the Master had trod.

In the first three verses of the chapter he compares love with several excellences which belong to the religious and ethical sphere. He gives a higher place

to love than to religious emotion expressing itself in articulate edifying speech or in the inarticulate speech described as "speaking with tongues." "If I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, but have not love, I am become sounding brass or a clanging cymbal." He gives a higher place to love than to the gift of prophetic speech, to deep knowledge of divine things, or to the inexplicable power of exceptionally gifted persons to do what is seemingly impossible. "And if I have the gift of prophecy, and know all mysteries and all knowledge; and if I have all faith, so as to remove mountains, but have not love, I am nothing." He gives a higher place to love than to will-force—divorced from love—which enables a man to do extraordinary service to the poor, and to accomplish astounding feats of self-mastery and self-sacrifice. "And if I bestow all my goods to feed the poor, and if I give my body to be burned, but have not love, it profiteth me nothing."

Verses 4–7 take us right into the heart of common daily life. Some of the fifteen traits of love here singled out have a direct bearing on the troubles which have arisen in the Corinthian church over the exercise of the "spiritual" gifts of its members. Love is not grudging in its appreciation of the gifts of others ("envieth not"); does not boast of one's own particular gift ("vaunteth not itself"); does not give itself airs about it ("is not puffed up"); does not fail in thoughtful considerateness for the feelings of others ("doth not behave itself

unseemly"). Other traits have a more general application. Love bears with the irritating behaviour of others ("suffereth long"); is ever ready to do a kind thing; is not intent upon selfish interests ("seeketh not its own"); does not give way to ill-temper ("is not provoked"); does not brood over wrongs ("taketh not account of evil"); has no secret satisfaction when others go wrong ("rejoiceth not in unrighteousness"); delights in whatever good is done by others ("rejoiceth in the truth"); says little about the lapses of others ("beareth—in margin of R.V. covereth—all things"); has faith in the better self of others ("believeth all things"); hopes for the best from them ("hopeth all things"); is patient with their failures and annoyances and injuries ("endureth all things").

Paul knows of course that love may be associated with intense spiritual emotion, with keen spiritual insight, with power to speak convincingly from a wealth of knowledge of divine things, with heroic acts of self-sacrifice, but on these aspects of love he is here silent. So intent is he upon his readers bringing love into all the petty details of daily duty.

> The trivial round, the common task,
> Will furnish all we ought to ask—
> Room to deny ourselves.

Only, Paul would have said, "room to love." Love is the sanctification of common life. And a love-sanctified common life is the soil out of which, when the call comes, there emerge the heroic triumphs of love.

Verses 8–12 recur to the contrast between love and knowledge (and incidentally "speaking with tongues" and prophecy). Here there is a Platonic touch which reminds us of what Paul says elsewhere: "We look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen: for the things which are seen are temporal, but the things which are not seen are eternal" (2 Cor. 4^{18}). In both passages a contrast seems to be drawn between things that are of transitory worth and things that are of eternal worth; between things that are of secondary and relative worth and things that are of primary and absolute worth. In the passage before us this contrast may at some points seem to pass over into the contrast between what belongs to the "present age" and what belongs to the "age to come." But the essential meaning of the passage is not thereby affected.

"Love never faileth." Love is intrinsically of eternal worth. Knowledge, "speaking with tongues," and prophecy are of relative worth; they are ancillary to what is of absolute worth, to love. Knowledge "is the second, not the first" [1]; it is a means for attaining an end higher than itself. When the end is attained; when one knows as he himself is known by God, whose knowledge of him is all one with love, then present knowledge, fragmentary, imperfect, darkling, is no longer in place, it "shall be done away."

[1] Tennyson, *In Memoriam*, cxiv.

In verse 13, which sums up in one brief weighty sentence what he has been saying in the preceding twelve verses, Paul makes use of his favourite formula for expressing the unity of Christian experience in its threefold aspect : " But now abideth faith, hope, love, these three." Hope must mean more here than the hope of the full fruition of the Christ-inspired life in the future after death. Else Paul could not speak of hope abiding when this hope is realised. Hope is to be taken in the wider sense of something which has eternal worth here and now. " Faith, hope and love abide," are of eternal worth ; " and the greatest of these is love."

Love never faileth, love is of eternal worth—that is Paul's interpretation of the meaning of life. It is into the mouth of St John, Browning puts the words :

> For life, with all it yields of joy and woe,
> And hope and fear—believe the aged friend—
> Is just our chance o' the prize of learning love. [1]

The words might have been put as appropriately into the mouth of St Paul. The supremacy of love belongs to the very heart of his Christian message. Knowledge reflected in doctrine has its place in Paul's teaching, but it is ever " the second, not the first " ; it is the handmaid of love. It is therefore not safe to set out to explain the specifically doctrinal passages in his epistles without taking as one of our guides the thirteenth chapter of First Corinthians.

[1] *A Death in the Desert.*

CHAPTER XI

THE GRACE OF GOD

ALIKE in his pre-Christian and his Christian years Paul's chief concern was how to be a good man; and alike in his pre-Christian and his Christian years he could not conceive of goodness apart from God.[1]

Behind goodness conceived as obedience to the Law was the supreme reality—God, the God of the Law. The conception of goodness as obedience to the Law was reflected in the conception of God as Lawgiver and Judge, just as the conception of goodness as love was reflected in the conception of God as the Lover of men.

This means that for Paul God was God as made known in ethical experience, the God of conscience. His chief concern was not with God as the explanation, satisfactory to the intellect, of the mysterious multiplicity of the phenomena of the universe, but with the God with whom he had to do in the inmost citadel of his own personality. His question was this: What is God to me in my struggle to be a

[1] "Thou canst not be pious without being good; nor canst thou be good without the grace of God"—an old saying quoted by Jülicher, *Paulus und Jesus*, p. 24.

good man ? Is he merely a Lawgiver and Watcher ? or is He my friendly Helper, my gracious Fellow-worker, my gracious Fellow-struggler ?

This question was answered for him in the hour of his sudden revolution. There came to him an experience of " the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ," of the " love of God shed abroad in his heart." Henceforth the thought of the love of God dominated his whole outlook upon life. Nothing could " separate him from the love of God."

In this experience of the love of God it is implied that God is very near to man ; " closer is He than breathing, nearer than hands and feet."

> Within his circle of experience burns
> The central truth, Power, Wisdom, Goodness—God. [1]

God is not far off, not external to man. He is the " Dweller within," immanent in the heart ; immanent, not in the general sense in which all things live and move and have their being in God, but in the deeper sense in which one personality is in touch with another personality. The God immanent in the heart is the Divine Companion, the Divine Ally of man's better self. In the wealth of His love He is ever striving to enrich and strengthen the better self in man ; to give him the victory in his struggle to be a good man. God is not only the ideal but also the inspirer of goodness.

To give expression to his conviction of the near-

[1] Browning, *The Ring and the Book*, x. 1633.

ness and helpfulness of God, the Lover of men, Paul makes use of various forms of phraseology.

He makes copious use of imagery drawn not from the law-court but from the life of the home. The Fatherhood of God and the sonship of man is one of his favourite themes. Frequently he speaks of God as Father, and not in a vague general sense, but with the depth of meaning which his experience of the love of God in Christ has read into it. Again and again he uses the phrase, "The God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ"—a phrase which suggests that he interpreted the Fatherhood of God in the light not only of what Jesus taught about God, but also of what God was to Jesus. The imagery drawn from the relation of a father to his boy indicates how closely personal was God's relation to men as Paul conceived it. It indicates that the God and Father of the Lord Jesus Christ could not but be ever helpful to His children in their struggle towards the highest kind of goodness: the strength of the Father's love made that inevitable. It is therefore not surprising that when Paul speaks, as he often does, of what sonship with the God and Father of the Lord Jesus Christ means he should be stirred into exultant thanksgiving. "For ye received not the spirit of bondage again unto fear; but ye received the spirit of sonship; whereby we cry, Abba, Father. . . . We are children of God, and if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ" (Rom. 8^{15-17}). "God sent forth

the Spirit of his Son into our hearts, crying, Abba, Father. So that thou art no longer a bond servant, but a son ; and if a son, then an heir through God " (Gal. $4^{6, 7}$). It is in this atmosphere of Fatherly love and filial trust that God immanent in the heart is ever the Helper of His children, as they strive to be " perfect as their Heavenly Father is perfect."

The phraseology which Paul here uses is similar to that of Jesus. But to another set of phrases—those in which the spirit of God is spoken of—there is little that is analogous in the language of Jesus. Paul's language may be different from that of Jesus, but it is the same spiritual experience which is described—the nearness and helpfulness of God in the moral struggle.

The spirit of God means the presence of God in the heart, and not only the presence of God, but more especially the power of God at work upon the spirit of man. Spirit and power are linked together by Paul. " Our gospel came to you not in word only, but also in power, and in the Holy Spirit " (1 Thess. 1^{5}). " My speech and my preaching were . . . in demonstration of the Spirit and of power " (1 Cor. 2^{4}). " That ye may be strengthened with power through his Spirit in the inward man " (Eph. 3^{16}). Power for what ? Power indeed for the whole range of the life and activity of the Christian ; but what is specially characteristic of Paul is his concentration upon the power of the spirit to foster goodness : " The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, long-

suffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, meekness, self-control" (Gal. $5^{22, 23}$). "The power of the spirit" is another way of saying that God is our ally in the struggle to be conformed to the likeness of Christ.

There is still another phrase which Paul is especially fond of using to express his conviction of the nearness and helpfulness of God. When we recall what the experience of Paul was under the Law, we understand why he should so often speak of the love of God as the *grace* of God. The grace of God is the love of God seen against the dark background of his early experience. In his pre-Christian days, to win God's favour was the dominant passion of his life, and God's favour, he believed, was to be won by the observance of the precepts of the Law. But the more he struggled, the deeper became his despair of being right with God. Then he made the discovery that the winning of God's favour was not conditioned by any merit acquired by the observance of the Law. God's love was independent of any merit of his; it was in the field earlier than any merit of his. He needed not to climb up to God by the toilsome and fruitless path of "works." God's love came down to him, was shed abroad in his heart; it did not wait to be merited. Therefore did he speak of this unmerited love of God as the grace of God.

Though Paul was decisive in ruling out observance of the Law as the way to win God's favour, this did

not mean that there was any slackening of the imperious demand for goodness. On the contrary, not only were the interests of goodness safeguarded, but a higher kind of goodness was disclosed, and not only disclosed, but made possible for man. The grace of God, as interpreted by Paul, did not cast a shadow on the "righteousness" of God, did not imperil the "moral order" of the universe. The outgoing of the unmerited love of God was the revelation of a higher kind of goodness than the justice of a judge bestowing favour on the ground of merit. And what this unmerited love aimed at for man was a higher kind of goodness than obedience to moral rules—goodness inspired by the spirit of life in Christ Jesus, goodness as the outcome of a love like that of Jesus. So little is grace at odds with goodness. To use Paul's own language, altering one word, but not altering the meaning: "Do we make goodness of none effect through grace? God forbid: nay, we establish goodness" (Rom. 3^{31}).

According to Paul, the God of grace is ever striving to win His children to higher achievements in goodness. Grace does not overbear, it seeks to win, man's will. It is true that Paul seems occasionally to suggest that God's will is everything and man's will nothing. That is due to his own exceptional experience when he was "apprehended" by Christ Jesus. In that hour what he was conscious of was the gracious will of God laying hold of him, not of the forth-putting of his own will-power. There was

indeed the consent of his own will to God's gracious overture, but so unreserved and complete that the consciousness of this was but dim. But Paul is far from countenancing the idea that the God of grace works upon man by overbearing instead of winning his will. "Work out your own salvation," he says to the Philippians, "with fear and trembling; for it is God which worketh in you both to will and to work" (Phil. $2^{12, 13}$). That is, "grace is given to *enable* man, not to spare him effort." Grace does not override a man's true self; it brings freedom for the true self. The personality of a child is not overridden by the influence brought to bear upon him through the personality of a wise and loving father. When we can say of a friend with a richer personality than ours that we feel "his being working in our own," does it ever occur to us that our freedom is thereby impaired, that our own will is overriden? So the God of grace, the indwelling Friend, so works in us both to will and to work that our own self is drawn out into a nobler selfhood.

Paul, as we have said, concentrates upon the *experience* of the grace of God, but he sees this experience in a large setting. He takes us back to the eternal purpose of God. Strong is his conviction that it is God's purpose that His love should be so shed abroad in our hearts as to enable us to rise to the highest possible heights of goodness; and strong is his conviction that this universe which God has created, if we use it aright, will be found to be our

ally in the struggle to co-operate with God in realising love's purpose. "We know that to them that love God all things work together for good, even to them that are called according to his purpose. For whom he did foreknow, he also did *predestinate* to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the first-born among many brethren" (Rom. $8^{28, 29}$).

Whatever may be said of the vagaries of not a few theologians, this passage gives expression to a conviction as lofty as it is heartening. That God from all eternity has been working out a great purpose in the history of our world; that this purpose has been inspired by love; that the goal of love's purpose has been that men should be conformed to the image of Christ—that is a philosophy of history which is lacking neither in width of sweep nor in grandeur of conception. But Paul does not put forward this great thought of the eternal and all-embracing purposiveness of the divine love merely as a philosophical speculation; he uses it for the heartening of humble readers of his letters. He would remind them that amid their weaknesses and failures, amid their heartaches and tribulations, they have behind them the ultimate reality in the world—the purposive love of God. "Being confident of this very thing, that he which began a good work in you will perfect it until the day of Jesus Christ" (Phil. 1^{6}). "What then shall we say to these things? If God is for us, who is against us? . . . Who shall

separate us from the love of Christ? shall tribulation, or anguish, or persecution, etc.? . . . Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him that loved us. For I am persuaded that neither death, nor life, etc. . . . shall be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord" (Rom. 8^{31-39}).

That the purposive love of God is at the heart of the history of the world, at the heart of the history of humanity, and at the heart of the life-story of every individual soul, is one of Paul's fundamental convictions. "God hath shut up all unto disobedience, that he might have mercy upon all" (Rom. 11^{32}). There are certain forms of theologising, supposed to be countenanced by Paul, which under the pressure of a misdirected logic have their issue in the strange idea that not all men, but only a select number, are the objects of God's purposive love. That is an idea for which Paul is not responsible. If God excluded any of His children from the working of His purposive love, He would no longer be the God and Father of Jesus, the story of whose all-embracing love we read in the Gospels. He would no longer transcend, but fall below, our own highest ideals of goodness.

Paul contemplates the possibility that God's purpose may be frustrated by men, but in regard to such frustration and the doom which it entails he never uses the term predestination or any term corresponding to it. This frustration by men of God's

gracious purpose gives rise to a problem, which, in spite of all attempts to solve it, remains at the end insoluble. The interests of God's sovereignty seem to clash with the interests of His goodness. To safeguard the interests of His sovereignty the suggestion is made that moral evil is to be traced in the last resort to God's sovereign power. That is, God's sovereignty is saved, but at the expense of His goodness. That is a desperate attempt to solve the problem. If man's responsibility for the evil he does is transferred from himself to God, morality ceases to have the meaning which has been universally attached to it; the foundation on which the moral world rests is destroyed.

In the long argument in chapters nine to eleven of the epistle to the Romans, where he is trying to throw light on the strange fact that the majority of the Jews, who were the natural heirs of the promises fulfilled in Christ, have not become Christians, Paul, it must be confessed, seems at one point to give countenance to the suggestion that God is responsible for man's evil. But let us look at the connection in which this suggestion seems to be made. There are differences, Paul argues, in the lot of different individuals and different nations, which cannot be accounted for by what they have themselves done or left undone, and must therefore be referred to the will of God; one is more highly favoured than another. That is the point of the illustration from the potter who makes one vessel for a more honour-

able and another for a less honourable use.[1] But between the Jews who have rejected Christ and those who have accepted Him there is a difference other than a difference in the providential lot assigned to them; there is a difference in the way they have discharged their moral responsibility in regard to the claims of Christ. Here Paul, a Jew arguing with Jews who accept everything they find in the Old Testament as authoritative, turns their attention to what they can read there about God hardening the heart of Pharaoh, and having mercy on whom he will have mercy.[2] Such a line of argument seems to make God responsible for the moral evil in Pharaoh's conduct. Whether or not it was calculated to be effective either with Jews or with Jewish Christians, one could wish that Paul had not made use of it. So much is it out of harmony with his fundamental convictions about God and goodness that he drops it, and we hear no more of God's sovereign will as the explanation of the rejection of

[1] The illustration has no relevance to the question of fore-ordination to eternal ruin. The potter makes neither the one vessel nor the other to be destroyed.

[2] There is no reference here to predestination to eternal suffering. If there is predestination of any sort, it is predestination to moral evil. But the term predestination is not used here.

What is meant by the hardening of Pharaoh's heart may be illustrated by the words of Æschylus: "When a man is hastening to his ruin, the god helps him on," *Persæ*, p. 744. The phrase of the Hebrew writer, as that of Æschylus, is a bold way of saying that moral deterioration is an inevitable consequence of wrong-doing.

Christ by the unbelieving Jews. He lays the responsibility for their rejection of Christ, not on God, but on themselves. "Israel, following after a law of righteousness, did not arrive at that law. Wherefore? Because they sought it not by faith, but as it were by works" (Rom. $9^{31, 32}$). "They did not subject themselves to the righteousness of God" (Rom. 10^{3}). So keen is his sense of the persistence of the love of God that he can see how this love has been using even Israel's rejection of Christ for its own purpose. "By their fall salvation is come unto the Gentiles" (Rom. 11^{11}). "I would not have you ignorant of this mystery . . . that a hardening in part hath befallen Israel, until the fulness of the Gentiles be come in" (Rom. 11^{25}). As he contemplates the amazing ways in which God's love works to achieve love's purpose, he concludes the long argument of these three chapters with an expression of his adoring wonder: "O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and the knowledge of God! how unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past tracing out!" (Rom. 11^{33}).

CHAPTER XII

GOD IN CHRIST

Paul's new experience of God was so mediated for him by Jesus that his God could not but be *God in Christ*. The phrase is peculiarly Pauline, but it expresses the mind of the early Christians. They, as well as he, felt that the God with whom they had to do was God revealed in Jesus Christ. And the conviction expressed in the phrase "God in Christ" has been one of the distinctive notes of Christianity throughout the ages.[1] Even J. S. Mill has recognised this: "It is Christ, rather than God, whom Christianity has held up to believers as the pattern of perfection for humanity. It is the God incarnate, more than the God of the Jews or of Nature, who being idealised has taken so great and salutary a hold on the modern mind."[2] Only, the antithesis should have been, "God in Christ, rather than the God of the Jews or of Nature."

It is in Christ that Paul finds the heart and will of God. The love of God is "the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord" (Rom. 8^{39}). The whole story of the love of Jesus for His fellows

[1] See *The Christ of Faith and the Jesus of History*, pp. 41, 80, 152, 227.

[2] *Three Essays on Religion*, p. 253.

is a disclosure of the heart and will of God. As it is put in the Fourth Gospel: "He that hath seen me hath seen the Father" (John 14^{9}). The supreme disclosure of the love of God is the manifestation of the love of Jesus in His sufferings and death. Sometimes it is the love of Jesus which is expressly spoken of: "The son of God who loved me, and gave himself up for me" (Gal. 2^{20}). At other times it is the love of God which is expressly spoken of: "God commendeth his own love towards us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us" (Rom. 5^{8}). But it is one and the same love which Paul has in view—the love of God in Christ.

The power which reconciles men to God, which "brings them into the very heart of God," is the power of the love of God in Christ: "God who reconciled us to himself through Christ. . . . God was in Christ reconciling the world to himself" (2 Cor. $5^{18, 19}$). And this power of the reconciling love of God in Christ is specially manifested in the love by which the sufferings and death of Jesus were inspired: "Christ Jesus, whom God set forth to be propitiatory, through faith, by his blood" (Rom. $3^{24, 25}$). The love of God in the Cross of Jesus laying its power upon the hearts of men takes once and for all the place of whatever sacrificial rites may ever have been regarded as a means of giving the worshipper a sense of reconciliation with God.[1]

[1] "The fundamental idea of ancient sacrifice is sacramental communion, and all atoning rites are ultimately to be regarded as

Another instance of Paul's use of his conception of God in Christ is found in the phrases, "Christ in me," "I in Christ." The more usual phrases for describing the personal experience of fellowship with God are "God in me," "I in God"; but for these phrases Paul for the most part substitutes his own distinctive phrases. "I live; and yet no longer I, but Christ liveth in me" (Gal. 2^{20}). "If any man is in Christ, there is a new creation" (2 Cor. 5^{17}). Before his conversion Paul lacked experience of intimate, trustful fellowship with God. That only came to him when God revealed His Son in him. He could not thereafter conceive of his fellowship with God apart from Christ. The God with whom he had fellowship was God in Christ. That is why he so often describes fellowship with God by the phrases, "Christ in me," "I in Christ."

This Pauline phraseology is sometimes regarded as the language of mystical religion and a warrant for claiming Paul as one of the greatest of the mystics. If emphasis upon personal experience of fellowship with God is a monopoly of mysticism, then Paul is undoubtedly a mystic. But the Pauline phraseology, so far from being that of the typical mystic, is in reality a safeguard against the aberra-

owing their efficacy to a communication of divine life to the worshippers, and to the establishment or confirmation of a living bond between them and their God."—W. Robertson Smith, *The Religion of the Semites*, p. 439. See a special note appended to this chapter, p. 186.

tions of mysticism. For Paul, God never fades away into the mere " Infinite," " the Great All," " Pure Being," " the Nameless Nothing " ; God is God revealed in the concrete wealth of the personality and life of Jesus Christ. So, when he looks out upon the world and the life of his fellows, he is not drawn towards the quietism of the mystics. If the spirit of God in Christ " breathes him into rest and joy," it also " breathes him out towards love and good works." [1] Paul's life in Christ is more than passive enjoyment ; it is inspiration for heroic activity. Just because he is " in Christ," he cannot but strive to make the will of God in Christ his own, to be a fellow-worker with God in Christ in furthering the purpose of divine love for every sphere of the life of humanity.

The conception of God in Christ, springing from Paul's individual spiritual experience, has a direct bearing upon his interpretation of the world in which he finds himself. This is what theologians speak of as " the cosmic significance of Christ."

The question of the relation of God, as experienced in heart and conscience, to the great world outside of us is one not merely for philosophers and theologians, but also for common folk. There are times in which each of us is forced to ask himself : What is the meaning of this world in which we have to " dree our weird " ? Is it friendly and helpful, or

[1] Ruysbroeck.

is it reckless of our interests and of all that we regard as of highest worth ? What is behind it all —some Power transcendently great and good, or a conglomeration of material forces, unintelligent, and indifferent to man's pursuit of goodness and happiness ? The answer to such questions has momentous practical consequences. As Marcus Aurelius puts it : " The world is either a welter of alternate combination and dispersion (that is, of material atoms) or a unity of order and providence. If the former, why crave to linger on in such a random medley and confusion ? Why take thought for anything except the eventual ' dust to dust ' ? Why vex myself ? Do what I will, dispersion will overtake me. But on the other alternative, I reverence, I stand stedfast, I find heart in the power that disposes all." [1] The answer to these questions is largely—not to say entirely—determined by the ethical ideals we cherish ; or to express the same thing in different language, by our experience of the God of conscience. " It is by the God within that we know the God without." [2]

One of the distinctive features of the religion of Israel was the firmly held conviction that the world was called into being and governed by the will of a righteous God. In the later period of Israel's history stress was laid on the part played by the

[1] VI. 10. Rendall's translation.

[2] A saying of an old writer quoted by E. Caird, *The Evolution of Religion*, i. 369.

Divine Wisdom in the creation of the world. "I was set up," so Wisdom is represented as saying, "from everlasting, from the beginning, or ever the earth was . . . . When he (God) established the heavens, I was there . . . when he marked out the foundations of the earth: then I was by him as a master-workman, and I was daily his delight . . . and my delight was with the sons of men" (Prov. 8^{22-31}). This conception of the function of Wisdom in the creation of the world was elaborated further by the author of the Wisdom of Solomon (about 100 B.C.)—a writing largely influenced by Stoic thought, and almost certainly known to and esteemed by Paul. "With thee (God) is wisdom, which knoweth thy works, and was present when thou wast making the world" (9^{9}). "She pervadeth all things by reason of her pureness. For she is a breath of the power of God, and a clear effulgence of the glory of the Almighty . . . hath power to do all things; and remaining in herself, reneweth all things . . . she reacheth from one end of the world to the other with full strength, and ordereth all things graciously" (7^{24}-8^{1}). Akin to this way of thinking was one of the leading conceptions of the Stoics. According to the Stoics, the Divine Reason (Logos) was not indeed behind or over the universe, but at the heart of it as the secret of its unity and order and intelligibility.

As Paul brooded over the relation of God to the created universe he may have had these and similar

conceptions in his view. In two passages he makes use of phraseology which in all likelihood he borrowed from the popular teaching of the Stoics. "To us there is one God, the Father, of whom are all things, and we unto him; and one Lord Jesus Christ, *through whom are all things, and we unto him*" (1 Cor. 8^{6}). "The Son of his love . . . who is the image of the invisible God, the first-born of all creation; *for in him were all things created*, in the heavens and upon the earth. . . . All things have been created *through him* and *unto him*" (Col. 1^{13-16}). The phraseology may be borrowed, but the thought expressed by it is Paul's own. He had discovered in the sphere of his own individual ethical experience that the thing of supreme worth was the love of God in Christ. Interpreting the "God without" by the "God within," he believes that "the All-great is the All-loving too," that the love of God in Christ is the ultimate reality in the created universe. This is the great thought he is trying to express when he says that all things have been created through Christ. This is his answer to the question: What is the meaning of this perplexing world? Love is its meaning—the love of God in Christ.

Here we find the divine motive for the universe being created. Plato had said: "Let me tell you, then, why the Creator created and made the universe. He was good, and no goodness can ever have any jealousy of anything. . . . He desired that all things should be as like himself as possible. This is the

true beginning of creation and of the world. . . . God desired that all things should be good" [1] In the Wisdom of Solomon we hear an echo of these sentences of Plato: "For thou lovest all things that are, and abhorrest none of the things which thou didst make; for never wouldst thou have formed anything, if thou didst hate it" (11[24]). Paul strikes a higher note than Plato or the Hebrew writer: the love of God in Christ was the "true beginning of creation and of the world."

Nor is it only at the beginning that Paul relates Christ to creation and the world. He relates Christ to the carrying out of God's purpose of love in the whole history of the universe. "In him all things consist" (hold together or cohere) (Col. 1[17]). It is God's purpose "to sum up all things in Christ, the things in the heavens, and the things upon the earth" (Eph. 1[10]). Christ gives their full meaning to all things; for example, its full meaning to the world of nature. Our modern theory of evolution has made us familiar with the idea that "man is organic to nature" [2]; that nature is only rightly understood when the whole process of evolution is seen to have been slowly making for its goal in the arrival of man upon the scene. "Nature cannot come to its rights, cannot show its highest meaning, until in the life of man it becomes the servant of a higher design." [3] "Nature and

[1] *Timæus*, 29 E.
[2] Professor Pringle-Pattison, *The Idea of God*, p. 178.
[3] E. Caird, *The Evolution of Religion*, ii. 124.

the laws of nature are instruments for the realisation of values; in personal life the values are realised." [1]

Of Christ, the crown of humanity, the ideal man, it is supremely true that man is the goal of the evolutionary process, that "man is organic to nature"; that man gives its highest meaning to nature. It is to his conviction of the organic connection between Christ—the ideal man—and nature Paul gives expression in the eighth chapter of the epistle to the Romans. He looks upon the world of nature as so closely linked with the spiritual life of man that the higher life achieved by man through Christ will have its final issue in the transformation of nature itself—a daring flight of imagination it may be, but none the less significant. "The whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain with us until now. . . . The earnest expectation of the creation waiteth for the revealing of the sons of God (for the fuller development of the spiritual life of man). . . . The creation itself also shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the liberty of the glory of the children of God" (Rom. $8^{22, 19, 21}$).

Man and nature are embraced in the one love-purpose of God, and what God's purpose is working out with man throws light on His purpose with nature. God's purpose for man is not, at least not primarily, to secure for him the enjoyment of pleasure or even of happiness, but something greater.

[1] Professor W. R. Sorley, *Moral Values and the Idea of God*, p. 128.

God "predestinated us to be conformed to the image of his Son" (Rom. 8^{29}). He "predestinated us unto adoption as sons through Jesus Christ unto himself" (Eph. 1^{5}). Paul concentrated not upon happiness, but upon goodness. He was sure that for himself it was God's purpose to make of him a good man after the fashion of Jesus Christ. So he believed that it was towards such a high end God was working out His purpose not only with the children of men, but also with the whole created universe. With such an interpretation of God's purpose, it was easier for Paul than for those who concentrate upon happiness to see a divine meaning even in the manifold evils which abound in the world. These evils raise a problem which we shall never be able fully to solve, but its pressure is immensely eased when it is recognised that this world is "a vale of soul making," that the divine purpose working through all things is to fashion men into the likeness of Christ.

Paul's teaching upon the relation of Christ to the created universe is no mere theological speculation about the mysteries of the Godhead. It bears primarily and very helpfully upon pressing problems with which all of us are confronted in one form or other, and in many other directions than those we have indicated.

There is, however, one aspect of Paul's teaching on the relation of Christ to the created universe so important that we single it out for special notice

—his conviction that the purposive love of God at work in the universe is the suffering, struggling, self-sacrificing love with which Jesus was inspired.

Whether God is "passionless spirit separated from the life of struggling humanity" or "a God who lives in the perpetual giving of himself, who shares the life of his finite creatures, bearing in and with them the whole burden of their finitude, their sinful wanderings and sorrows and the suffering without which they cannot be made perfect"[1]—that is a question which has a direct bearing on our ethical ideals. In the interests of ethical life protests are raised against the conception of God as the "Divine Eremite." Here Browning is spokesman for many. He argues that if the self-sacrificing love which brings a man to the help of another is not found in God, then man would surpass God.

> Do I find love so full in my nature, God's ultimate gift,
> That I doubt His own love can compete with it? here, the parts shift?
> Here, the creature surpass the Creator, the end, what Began?

So David speaks, and further on in the poem thus addresses God:

> Would I suffer for him that I love? So would'st Thou—so wilt Thou.[1]

The same question is asked in a recent Gifford Lecture: "Is it reasonable to deny of the fontal life of God that giving of Himself and finding of Himself

[1] Professor Pringle-Pattison, *The Idea of God*, p. 411.
[2] *Saul.*

in others, which we recognise as the perfection and fruition of the human life? This would be, under pretext of exalting the divine, to place it lower than the best we know." [1]

Paul is here on the side of the poet and the philosopher. He is riveted by the self-effacing, self-humbling, self-sacrificing love of Christ. When he speaks of it, it is with a singular warmth. And such love it is impossible for him to deny to God. His God is God in Christ, the God whose heart and will have been disclosed to him in the heart and will of Jesus. There is therefore no room in Paul's thoughts for a conception of God as "passionless spirit separated from the life of struggling humanity."

It is in the second chapter of the epistle to the Philippians that Paul's higher conception of God has its fullest expression. Here Paul takes for granted the conception of God as God in Christ, as God revealed in the suffering, struggling, self-sacrificing love of Jesus. So his reference to it comes in incidentally.

The passage in which this conception of God is thus incidentally expressed has given rise to an extraordinary amount of theological discussion. It has many difficulties for its interpreter. One clue to its interpretation is the connection in which Paul refers to the self-emptying, self-sacrificing love of Jesus. He has not been expounding his Christology to the Philippians; he has been appealing to them "that ye be of the same mind, having the same love,

[1] Professor Pringle-Pattison, *The Idea of God*, p. 294.

being of one accord, of one mind; doing nothing through faction or through vainglory, but in lowliness of mind each counting other better than himself; not looking each of you to his own things, but each of you also to the things of others" (Phil. 2^{2-4}). Then comes in his reminder that in Christ Jesus has been revealed the heart and will of God—in verses 4–8. If we were more fully acquainted with conceptions familiar to Paul and to some of his readers, which he here makes use of, the difficulties raised for us to-day by these verses might be greatly eased. There are two conceptions which may have influenced, not indeed his main thought, but the particular way in which he has given expression to it. One of these is the apocalyptic conception[1] of the Messiah as a Heavenly Being, belonging to the sphere of God, pre-existent from eternity, and to appear on earth in God's good time. The other conception—whence derived it is not easy to say—is that of ideal human nature,—essentially spirit, sinless, deathless. This Heavenly Being appeared on earth in the likeness of men; He shared the lot of sinful, suffering men; He identified Himself with them. What His love involved for Him in this identification of Himself with His fellows is set forth in heart-stirring words: "Though he was divine by nature, he did not snatch at equality with God but emptied himself by taking the nature of a servant; born in human

[1] For example in the *Similitudes* of the Book of Enoch.

guise and appearing in human form, He humbly stooped in his obedience even to die, and to die upon the Cross " (Phil. 2^{6-8} M.).[1]

Thus does Paul ground his appeal to the Philippians for a noble kind of love on their knowledge of the heart and will of God disclosed in the self-emptying, self-sacrificing love of Jesus Christ. In calling upon them to rise to this great height, he is calling upon them to attune themselves to the love-purpose of God, to be fellow-workers with a self-giving, self-sacrificing God; may we not even say, with a God who is straining and struggling that His love purpose may not fail?

Paul has great thoughts about the Person of Christ, and they are the direct outcome of what Christ has been to him. His experience of the love of God in Christ is behind what he has to say about all things being created through Christ and cohering in Christ, and about the self-emptying, self-sacrificing love of Christ as the revelation of the heart and will of God, as the revelation of the ultimate reality of the universe. His Christology is rooted in his experience of the love of God in Christ; apart from that experience his Christology is robbed of its significance.

[1] Elsewhere in his epistles Paul speaks of the sinless one sharing in the misery caused by sin, of being made sin for His fellows, that they might become righteous (2 Cor. 5^{21}); of Christ who was Himself essentially spirit " being made under the law—involved in Jewish legalism—to redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons " (Gal. 4^{4-5}); and of Christ, Himself essentially deathless, suffering death that His fellows might become deathless too.

So what he aims at for his readers is not to gain their assent to doctrines about the person of Christ, but to lead them into a fuller experience of the love by which Jesus was inspired. Such experience is the primary thing; doctrines which spring out of this experience are a secondary thing. To put the two things—the spiritual experience and the resultant form of doctrinal expression—on the same level is an aberration for which Paul is not responsible. Still less is he responsible for the tendency, too often manifested in the Christian centuries and countenanced by at least one of the "historic creeds," to attach more importance to assent to orthodox doctrines about the Person of Christ than to a Christ-inspired life.[1] Here Paul is true to the teaching of the Master: "Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he which doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven" (Matt. 7^{21}).

Paul's Conception of the Significance of the Reconciling Love of God manifested in the Sufferings and Death of Jesus.

According to Paul what God is aiming at through the manifestation of His love in the sufferings and death of Jesus is the restoration of His estranged children to filial fellowship with Himself. Such restoration carries with it the identification of their will with His will, loyalty to His ideal of the truly good life, loyalty to the ideal set forth in the life of Jesus. That is, such restoration means moral renewal, a radical change of mind and heart and will. So in reconciliation with God in Christ there is involved the annulling of the

[1] See *The Christ of Faith and the Jesus of History*, p. 213.

moral deterioration and the eternal ruin which Paul regards as the inevitable, the organic consequences of sin—consequences which cannot be annulled unless the sin itself is annulled.

If, however, what God is aiming at through the manifestation of His love in the sufferings and death of Jesus is interpreted as the remission of penalty, and if penalty is interpreted, not as the inevitable organic consequence of sin, but as suffering here or hereafter which can be remitted by the mere *fiat* of a judge, then we are taken out of the atmosphere of the home and fatherly love into that of the law-court and legal procedure. Here a judge cannot deal with the law-breaker as a father would with his erring child. If he were to remit the penalty which the law has attached to its violation, the moral interests of society would be prejudiced. A father in forgiving his child is not under the necessity of inflicting corporal punishment as the only means of convincing his child of the evil of his ways. In the way in which he exercises his forgiving love he has other and more potent means at his command. But the judge has not command of the means available for the father, and therefore he cannot remit the penalty.

There are, then, two ways of interpreting the chief end God has in view in the manifestation of His love in the sufferings and death of Jesus: (1) the restoration of His estranged children to filial fellowship, with the moral renewal involved in this; and (2) the remission of penal sufferings due here or hereafter to sin, as distinguished from the organic consequences of sin which can only be annulled when the sin itself is annulled.

These two different ways of interpreting the manifestation of God's love in the sufferings and death of Jesus have often been combined by theologians in their theories about the atonement, and the combining of them has been at the root of endless difficulties and perplexities. What is spoken of as the forensic theory of the atonement tends to lean on the second of the two ways described above. This theory has a praiseworthy object in view—to safeguard moral interests. It has its justification, if the remission of the penal sufferings due to sin here or hereafter is the chief thing the God of grace is aiming at, and if the relation of God to the sinner is interpreted in terms of the relation of a judge to the law-breaker. Without some such safeguard as this theory lays stress upon the

mere remission of penalty would imperil moral interests. But if with Paul we assume that what God is aiming at in the manifestation of His love is the restoration of filial fellowship with Himself, involving moral renewal, and if with Paul we exchange the atmosphere of the law-court for that of the home in which fatherly love reigns, then moral interests are not endangered; they are not only safeguarded, they are emphasised. What the God of grace is aiming at through Christ's sufferings and death is the bringing in of power to rise to a higher kind of goodness than had been dreamed of, and what Jesus suffered that this power might be brought into the hearts of men is God's own witness to the supremacy of moral interests. Reconciliation with God in Christ, involving loyal acceptance of the divine ideal of goodness realised in the life of Jesus, is absolutely incompatible with any sort of moral slackness; it is the surest safeguard of the "righteousness" of God, of the "moral government" of the world.

It is often alleged that Paul has thrown the weight of his authority on the side of the forensic theory of the atonement, and in so doing has been a misinterpreter of the mind of his Master.

Various aspects of Paul's life and teaching, which have been under consideration in preceding chapters, point in a quite contrary direction. Even in his pre-Christian days his main concern was, not how to escape from suffering as the penal consequence of sin, but how to be a good man. Further, he has extraordinarily little to say about mere suffering in the future: it is of eternal ruin he speaks. Still further, he is so uncompromising in ousting legal categories from the conception of God's relation to man, that any theory about Christ's sufferings and death, which is based on the procedure of a law-court, is out of harmony with his dominant convictions.

This theory is a heritage, not from Paul, nor (with but little qualification) from the Church of the early centuries. It is a heritage from the Western Church, and especially from the Western Church of the Middle Ages. It harmonised with the prevalence of legal categories by which Latin Christianity, habituated to the atmosphere of the legal system of imperial Rome, was powerfully influenced, and it harmonised with the ideal only too prevalent in the Middle Ages that salvation was first and foremost escape from eternal suffering in hell.

CHAPTER XIII

LORDSHIP OVER THE WORLD

Our attitude to the great world with which we are confronted is largely responsible for what we make of life. Strangely divergent is that attitude.

> How good is man's life, the mere living! how fit to employ
> All the heart and the soul and the senses for ever in joy!

In these words Browning's Saul is spokesman for those who in their better moments look out upon the world with thanksgiving, gladness, and hope. But there are those who in their darker moments recognise their spokesman in the Preacher: "So I hated life; because the work that is wrought under the sun was grievous unto me: for all is vanity and a striving after wind" (Eccl. 2^{17}); or in the words of a chorus of Sophocles: "Not to be born is, past all prizing, best: but when a man hath seen the light, this is next best by far, that with all speed he should go thither, whence he hath come." [1]

The voice of the pessimist is heard not only in ancient, but also in more modern literature. The popularity of the poems of Omar Khayyam and of the essays of Montaigne indicates how widespread is the sense of the futility and meaninglessness of

[1] *Œdipus at Colonus*, 1224.

human life. The experiences which seem to justify this pessimistic outlook are very varied. For our present purpose only a few of these experiences need be referred to.

Man, it is assumed, has a right to happiness, or at least to a balance of pleasure over pain. But how ruthlessly is that right often denied to him! What a scene this world presents of "nature red in tooth and claw," of "man's inhumanity to man," of sufferings inflicted upon man by natural disasters spoken of as "acts of God," of manifold sorrows by which the human heart is bruised, of death, "the shadow feared of man!" Can such a world be the creation of an all-powerful, all-good God? If He is all-good, can He be all-powerful? If He is all-powerful, can He be all-good? If the bestowal of happiness upon His creatures is the chief end of the Creator, what a commentary upon His work is the world as we actually find it!

Again, it is assumed that the end aimed at in the moral government of the world is the apportionment of pleasure as the reward of obedience to the moral law, and of suffering as the penalty of disobedience. But how glaringly is this assumption flouted by facts! Does not experience teach us that the nobler a man is, the greater may be his sufferings, that indeed it may be exceptional goodness which involves him in exceptional suffering; and that, on the other hand, the wicked "are not in trouble as other men are, neither are they plagued like other men" (Ps.

73^5). In all this is there not another illustration of "the unfathomable injustice of the nature of things"? [1]

Once again, we hear a complaint against "the nature of things" from a different quarter. How often it happens that those who make the enjoyment of pleasure their chief end discover that the objects of desire, even when attained, have somehow turned into Dead Sea fruit. What they fancied would be pleasure has issued in boredom. "I said in mine heart, Go to now, I will prove thee with mirth. . . . Whatsoever mine eyes desired I kept not from them: I withheld not my heart from any joy. . . . Then I looked on all the works that my hands had wrought, and on the labour that I had laboured to do: and, behold, all was vanity and a striving after wind, and there was no profit under the sun" (Eccl. $2^{1, 10, 11}$). If happiness is the chief end of life, and if even the most successful pursuit of it issues but in boredom, is life not inevitably robbed of its worth-whileness? On such conditions how can one throw oneself with heart and strength into life's tasks, either for one's own sake or for the sake of others? [2]

If the assumption is valid that man's chief end is happiness, and that the chief end of man's Creator is the bestowal of happiness upon His

[1] Huxley, *Essays*, ix. 59.

[2] *Cf.* J. S. Mill's account in his *Autobiography* of the "crisis in his mental history." "The only chance (of happiness) is to treat, not happiness, but some end external to it, as the purpose of life," p. 142.

creatures, there is no lack of justification for a pessimistic outlook upon life. That assumption, if not qualified by considerations of a different kind, leads towards a revolt against the world and its Creator. But such a revolt may have at the heart of it a hint of the "promise and potency" of the spirit of man. The miseries of which man complains testify, as Pascal says, to his greatness. "They are the miseries of a great lord, of a dethroned sovereign." "In spite of all the miseries which cleave to us, and hold us, as it were, by the throat, there is within us an irrepressible instinct which exalts us. The greatness of man is so visible that it may be deduced from his very misery. His very miseries prove his greatness." Pascal is pointing in the right direction for an understanding of much of the misery which man inflicts upon himself by brooding over the evils of his lot. Such questions as these are raised: What if man is greater than he has taken himself to be? What if something higher than happiness is the chief end of man and the chief end of man's Creator in His dealings with him? What if our quarrel with the world in which we find ourselves has its root in our ignoring what the true interests of the spirit of man are, and what service the world, as God has planned it, may render to these true interests? What if, through a revolution in our conception of man's chief end and of God's purpose with man, there is a way of escape from the inward misery which tortures the

heart and breeds revolt against " the unfathomable injustice of the nature of things " ?

Upon the perplexing experiences, to which reference has been made, what Paul has to say about the lordship of the Christian over the world has a direct and fruitful bearing. His message is " a wind wafting health from salubrious lands." The secret of his regal attitude to the world is to be found in certain fundamental convictions with which he confronts it. Two of these may be indicated.

In the first place, he is convinced that what is most worth striving for is to grow in Christ-like character, to be " conformed to the image of Christ," and that what is of supreme worth in this character is love like that of Christ. Even when he was still a Pharisee, his chief concern, as we have said, was not how to secure happiness and escape pain, but how to be a good man. As a Christian this chief concern of his was intensified. He had a full share of the ills of life, but he was not given to brooding over these and quarrelling with his lot. He looked forward to a blessed life on the other side of death, but nothing was further from his thoughts than the idea that the living of a good life here was to be chiefly valued as the condition on which happiness was to be enjoyed hereafter. No; for Paul the chief end of life here or hereafter was growth in Christ-like character.

In the second place, he is convinced that God in

Christ is at the heart of the whole created universe. This conviction about God and the universe had its root in his own ethical experience. A sense of the supreme worth of love, and faith in God whose love was revealed to him in the love of Jesus—these were two aspects of one and the same experience. The love of God in Christ was an immediate certainty; it was not something he had to prove; he had experienced it. Beginning with this personal experience, he went on to interpret the world in the light of it. "The Christian who thinks cannot keep God in his soul and leave him out of his world." [1] As we have already seen,[2] when Paul says that "in Christ were all things created" (Col. 1^{16}), he means that at the heart of the whole created universe there is the love of God working out love's purpose. What love's purpose aims at is that man should be conformed to the image of Christ (Rom. 8^{29}). So Paul dares to believe that the whole created universe is man's ally, as he strives to become what God means him to be; that there is nothing in the whole range of human experience which may not be turned to account in the interest of God's purpose and man's chief end.

In the light of convictions such as these we see how inevitable it was for Paul to make much of the Christian's lordship over the world. The world

[1] Professor W. R. Sorley, *Moral Values and the Idea of God*, p. 479.

[2] P. 179.

with which he finds himself confronted is not an enemy to be feared, it is a heritage to be taken possession of. "Ye have not received the spirit of bondage again unto fear" (Rom. 8^{15}). "God sent forth the Spirit of his Son into our hearts, crying, Abba, Father. So that thou art no longer a bond-servant, but a son; and if a son, then an heir through God" (Gal. $4^{6, 7}$). God's world is the heritage of God's children; their own property to be used and enjoyed for realising God's great purpose for them. "The earth is the Lord's, and the fulness thereof" (Ps. 24^{1} quoted 1 Cor. 10^{26}), and God invites His children to serve themselves heirs to their inheritance. As an heir of God made free of his Father's world, Paul is more thrilled by the prospect of the good he can win from life than depressed by the thought of its possible ills.

"All things are yours," he says to the Corinthians in a passage which reveals how near his heart lay this thought of the Christian's lordship over the world.[1] He is rebuking the party-spirit which had broken out amongst the Christians of Corinth, and was splitting the community into factions; one

[1] In this passage—1 Cor. 3^{1-23}—Paul is using for his own purpose terms of expression familiar to readers acquainted with the popular teaching of the Stoics. It was claimed for "the wise man"—the ideal man of the Stoics—that all things belonged to him. "The wise man alone is free; he is the true king." "The wise man," says Seneca, "is he that is master of all things." "When we behold a wise man's mind, powerful over all things, and spreading his empire over all the world, we say that all things are his."

faction ranging themselves under the name of Paul, another under that of Apollos, another under that of Peter. He blames them for their sectarian narrowness. Especially does he lay stress on this, that by their sectarian narrowness they are impoverishing their Christian life. "Paul, Apollos, Peter," so in effect he appeals to them, "are all your servants. Each of them has a service to render to you, something to teach you about Christ, some contribution to make towards the building up of your Christian character. Glory not in any one man as if he, and not God, were the central light. Each Christian teacher belongs to you all. Use each of them as God's gift to you." Then Paul "goes off at a word." He takes wing and ranges amid the spacious grandeur of his outlook upon the world. "For all is yours—Paul, Apollos, Cephas, the world, life, death, all that is and shall be—all is yours" (1 Cor. 3^{22}). And this regal outlook upon the world he traces up to faith that at the heart of the world the love of God in Christ is at work. "Ye are Christ's; and Christ is God's" (1 Cor. 3^{23}). Or, as he expresses the same thought elsewhere: "He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not also with him freely give us all things?" (Rom. 8^{32}).

Not flight from the world is Paul's watchword, but lordship over the world. He believes that God's world is helpful for the life of the spirit. He makes

indeed imperious demands for renunciation, but he distrusts the worth of renunciations which do not minister to the interests of the life of the spirit, as he interprets these interests. If his ethical ideal had been the self-centred independence which the Stoics belauded, the loosening of social ties might have seemed praiseworthy. But love, love like that of Christ, was what he aimed at, and how could such love be attained but by the widening and strengthening of social ties? Again, if his religious ideal had been the losing of his finite self in God as the Infinite, then escape from entanglement with the finite world and its interests might also have seemed praiseworthy. But if it was his aim to have fellowship with God in Christ and to be a fellow-worker with God in carrying out the divine purpose for himself and for his fellows, it was not flight from the world which was demanded, but mastery over it. Alike on the religious and on the ethical side flight from the world was at variance with the highest interests of the life of the spirit.

In the epistle to the Colossians Paul has occasion to express his mind about an incipient form of the ascetic flight from the world, which was to exercise in after ages an extraordinary influence upon the life of Christendom. Some of the Colossian Christians had been attracted to the ascetic practices which seemed to many of the more zealous adherents of the religious cults of that age to open up the way for exceptional attainments in moral and religious

excellence. They laid stress upon abstinence from things which were in themselves legitimate; for example, from marriage [1] and from particular foods and drinks. Paul is impatient with this magnifying of renunciations which have no worthy end to serve. "Why submit to rules and regulations like 'Hands off this!' 'Taste not that!' 'Touch not this!'—referring to things that perish by being used. These rules are determined by human precepts and tenets; they get the name of 'wisdom' with their self-imposed devotions, with their fasting, with their rigorous discipline of the body, but they are of no value, they simply pamper the flesh (R.V. are not of any value against the indulgence of the flesh)" (Col. 2^{20-23} M.). Paul would have his readers turn away from "the wintry negativity" of asceticism and concentrate upon the positive wealth of the life of the spirit, as interpreted by Christ. "Seek the things that are above, where Christ is.

[1] Some of Paul's remarks about wedded life in the seventh chapter of First Corinthians suggest that he made too little of the worth of wedded life in drawing out and strengthening that love which is the link of perfectness. Here he seems to halt in carrying out his conviction about the Christian's lordship over the world. How are we to explain his attitude to wedded life? His sense of the imminence of the Parousia takes us only a little way. If we knew more about it, his early experience of the life of the home at Tarsus might take us further. Strict discipline, we may well believe, was enforced, but if love had been a dominant feature in the relations between father and mother, and between parents and children, would not his appreciation of the spiritual worth of wedded life been somewhat warmer? We can but ask the question.

. . . Put on a heart of compassion, kindness, humility, meekness, long-suffering; forbearing one another, and forgiving each other . . . and above all these things put on love, which is the bond of perfectness" (Col. $3^{1, 12, 14}$).

It is in connection with his attitude to the ills of life that we have the fullest illustration of what Paul means by lordship over the world.

These ills are not a problem for him to solve; they are an opportunity to seize and to press into the service of the life of the spirit. In such an attitude he has ample support, not only from ethical teachers in every age, but also from ordinary men and women who have had experience of the ills of life. It is recognised that the things which invest the life of man with its highest worth, such as heroism and self-sacrificing love and "man's unconquerable mind," could not have been won had there been no struggle with ills to call them forth. "For the greatest and the best, you must seek among those who have abounded in hardships and been passed through the fire. Ease and prosperity may supply a sufficient school for the respectable *commoners* in character: but 'without suffering is no man ennobled.'" [1] Or, as the same thought has been expressed more tersely by Burke: "None can aspire to act greatly but those who are of force to suffer greatly."

[1] Martineau, *A Study of Religion*, ii. 95.

On this theme Paul is a singularly inspiring teacher. He rises to great heights, and what he has to say goes home to the deep places in the human heart. Here, as elsewhere, he has been to school with his Master. We know that his mind and heart were riveted upon the sufferings and death of Jesus, and that what held him was the amazing love disclosing itself there. But how could that love have been but for the struggle of Jesus with the ills of life—sufferings, heartaches, disappointments, the murderous rage of His enemies, and, as the climax of all, the Cross of Calvary? For Paul nothing greater in worth could be found than the love of Jesus, and but for the ills of life how could it ever have been manifested and made known to men? And Jesus not merely submitted patiently to the ills which befell Him; He welcomed them with a stern joy, for He was sure that through His love-inspired sufferings His purpose to be the Helper and Redeemer of His fellows would only be furthered. With a serene faith in His lordship over the world, He said to the Twelve in view of His imminent death: "I have a baptism to be baptized with; and how am I straitened till it be accomplished!" (Luke 12^{50}).

Love like that of Jesus, evoked in the clash with suffering like that of Jesus—that became Paul's ideal of a heroic goodness which could compel the worst of ills to further the interests of the life of the spirit. How powerfully this thought of the disclosure of the

love of Jesus through His sufferings and death worked in Paul may be gathered from the frequency and fervour with which he speaks of his ambition to be a follower of the Master on the way of the Cross. "We are pressed on every side," he says to the Corinthians, "yet not straitened; perplexed, yet not unto despair; pursued, yet not forsaken; smitten down, yet not destroyed; always bearing about in the body the dying of Jesus, that the life also of Jesus may be manifested in our body" (2 Cor. 4^{8-10}). In speaking to the Philippians about his life-aim he tells them how he strains to know "the fellowship of his sufferings, becoming conformed unto his death" (Phil. 3^{10}). With reference to his sufferings on behalf of the Colossians he does not shrink from using strikingly bold language: "I fill up on my part that which is lacking of the afflictions of Christ in my flesh for his body's sake, which is the church" (Col. 1^{24}). To the Galatians he reveals the secret of his life in these few words: "I have been crucified with Christ" (Gal. 2^{20}).

Paul has had more than an ordinary share of Christ's love-sufferings. He tells the Corinthians how "the sum of Christ's sufferings accruing to him have been inexhaustible" (2 Cor. 1^{5}); how he is like men sentenced to death "to make the crowning sport in the amphitheatre" (1 Cor. 4^{9}); how he is "made as the refuse of the world, the offscouring of all things" (1 Cor. 4^{13}); how he is "afflicted on every side; fightings without, fears within" (2

Cor. 7^5) ; how sufferings have been multiplied upon him beyond what has fallen to the lot of any other minister of Christ (2 Cor. 11^{23-28}). And he accepts his sufferings with something more than patient resignation. He so accepts them that he is "more than a conqueror," he so handles them as to win from them gains that could not otherwise have been his. Here we are reminded of Wordsworth's *Happy Warrior*, who "turns his necessity to glorious gain,"

> Who, if he be called upon to face
> Some awful moment to which Heaven has joined
> Great issues, good or bad, for human kind,
> Is happy as a lover ; and attired
> With sudden brightness, like a man inspired.

"Attired with sudden brightness"—that is how Paul confronts and welcomes the ills of life. See how he deals with one of the ills which befell him. "There was given to me a thorn in the flesh, a messenger of Satan, to buffet me. . . . Concerning this thing, I besought the Lord thrice, that it might depart from me. And he hath said unto me, My grace is sufficient for thee : for my power is made perfect in weakness. *Most gladly therefore will I rather glory in my weaknesses*, that the strength of Christ—which is the love of Christ—may rest upon me. Wherefore, *I take pleasure in weaknesses, in injuries, in necessities, in persecutions, in distresses*, for Christ's sake : for when I am weak, then am I strong"—strong in Christ-like love (2 Cor. 12^{7-10}). So also in his relations with his fellows he can give a

heroic welcome to suffering, for love's sake. What though his service involves him in endless hardship and heartaches, the life that would otherwise be full of pain "love leads joyfully." "Ye are in our hearts," he says to the Corinthians, "to die together and live together . . . I am filled with comfort, I overflow with joy in all our affliction" (2 Cor. $7^{3,4}$). Picturing his death as the pouring out of a drink offering, he says to the Philippians: "If I am offered upon the sacrifice and service of your faith, I joy and rejoice with you all" (Phil. 2^{17}).

So to confront even the ills of life as to compel them to further the highest interests of the life of the spirit—is not this true lordship over the world? And to exercise such lordship—is not this to go as far as finite man can towards a solution of the perennial problem of evil?

But to one of the ills of life we have not yet referred, and that the last and, to many persons, darkest of all. Even here Paul claims for the Christian lordship over the world. "All things are yours; death is yours." The life of fellowship with Christ is deathless life, deathless as the life of Christ Himself. It carries in its heart the assurance that "life is life for evermore," for here and now it is eternal life. "We know," he says to the Corinthians, "that if the earthly house of our tabernacle be dissolved, we have a building from God, a house not made with hands, eternal, in the heavens." The origin of this conviction of his is indicated in

the immediately preceding verse. "We look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen: for the things which are seen are temporal; but the things which are not seen are eternal." This does not mean that Paul disparages the present life, that he may concentrate his attention the more fully upon the life which lies beyond death. No; "the things which are eternal" belong to the present as well as to the future. Fellowship with the eternal God, unflinching devotion to God-like ends, to the service of what is good and true—these are the things which are eternal, and the life which is concentrated on these eternal things here and now has in the heart of it the hope of immortality.[1] The same thought is expressed in different phraseology where Paul speaks of the Christian who shares in the life of the risen Christ sharing in Christ's deathless life. "If the Spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwelleth in you, he that raised up Christ Jesus from the dead shall quicken also your mortal bodies through his Spirit that dwelleth in you" (Rom. 8^{11}). "If we died with Christ, we believe that we shall also live with him; knowing that Christ being raised from the dead dieth no more" (Rom. $6^{8, 9}$). Life inspired by the spirit of Christ is the pledge of victory over death. "O death, where is thy victory? O death, where is thy sting? . . . Thanks

[1] *Cf.* the quaint saying of Sir Thomas Browne in *Religio Medici*: "The way to be immortal is to die daily."

be to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ" (1 Cor. $15^{55, 57}$).

From his experience of fellowship with God in Christ Paul is here giving more definite expression to the faith which inspired the Psalmist in presence of death: "Nevertheless I am continually with thee: Thou hast holden my right hand. Thou shalt guide me with thy counsel, and afterward receive me to glory. Whom have I in heaven but thee? And there is none upon earth I desire beside thee. My flesh and my heart faileth. But God is the strength of my heart and my portion for ever" (Ps. 73^{23-26}). The Psalmist may have had no such definite picture of the future life as we find in the Judaism of a later day, but he had a genuine faith in immortality; the only kind of faith in immortality, indeed, which is of spiritual value—the faith, springing from an experience of fellowship with the eternal God, which Jesus had in view when He said to the Sadducees who put a question to Him about the resurrection: "As touching the dead, that they are raised; have ye not read in the book of Moses, in the place concerning the Bush, how God spake unto him saying, I am the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob? He is not the God of the dead, but of the living" (Mark $12^{26, 27}$).

As Paul's faith in immortality is rooted in his experience of the Christ-life, in the life of the spirit which *is* eternal life, we have here the clue to his interpretation of the character of the future life.

It is not essentially different from the Christ-life as experienced on this side of death; it is the full fruition of the present Christ-life. So he often speaks of the life of the spirit lived here on earth as an earnest,[1] an instalment or foretaste of a greater life beyond the present. "He that wrought us for this very thing (that is, that what is mortal may be swallowed up of life) is God, who gave unto us the earnest of the Spirit" (2 Cor. 5^5).[2] "Now he that stablisheth us with you in Christ, and anointed us, is God; who also sealed us, and gave us the earnest of the Spirit in our hearts" (2 Cor. $1^{21, 22}$). "Ye were sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise, which is an earnest of our inheritance, unto the redemption of God's own possession" (Eph. $1^{13, 14}$).

Living for things that are of eternal worth, living on earth the deathless life of Christ, Paul can confront death undismayed, for he looks upon death as ministering to the furtherance of that life of the spirit in which he finds his chief good. All things are his; death is his. So he confronts death not only with calm confidence, but even, especially towards the close of his career, with a wistful longing. "We are of good courage, and are willing rather to be absent from the body, and to be at home with the Lord" (2 Cor. 5^8). "To me to live is Christ,

[1] *Cf.* Wordsworth's use of this word:

The primrose flower peeped forth
To give an earnest of the spring.

[2] "He who has schooled us for this change is God, who has given us His spirit as a pledge that so it shall be" (Rutherford's rendering).

and to die is gain. . . . I am in a strait betwixt the two, having the desire to depart and be with Christ; for it is very far better: yet to abide in the flesh is more needful for your sake" (Phil. $1^{21, 23}$).

So Paul bears himself as lord over death as well as lord over life.

Paul's optimism is linked in the closest way with his sense of lordship over the world.

A characteristic feature of the race of which he was a member was a hopeful outlook upon the future, rooted in their faith in a God of righteousness.[1] But the optimism, native to him as a pious Jew, was deepened and purified through his Christian experience. At the Cross of Christ he learned how love could press the worst of ills into its service; at the Cross of Christ he got a new understanding of the divine love which was working out its own purpose in the created universe as in the lives of men. Through the Cross of Christ he

[1] "The spirit of hope, the invincible optimism which survived every disappointment, sustained the Jewish people to the last. They laid hold of the future as their own possession, with a confidence unapproached by any other nation."—S. H. Butcher, *Lectures on Greek Subjects*, p. 39. The prophets of Israel in the darkest hour of adversity "looked for a spiritual restoration and triumph which should be for the world at large the beginning of a glorious future. This ideal, ardently desired, possessed the mind of the pious Jew, it fed in him a fount of sacred joy, and kept alive a spark of hope in a world of spiritual despair against the day when he who was 'the desire of all nations' should come."—Butcher, *Some Aspects of the Greek Genius*, p. 165.

gained a new outlook upon the world and its ills. He knew the dark side of man's life, and he had personal experience of the sufferings and sorrows and heartaches of man's lot. But the longer he matched himself against the ills of life, the stronger became his conviction that they brought him opportunities of making a fresh attainment in conformity to the image of Christ. It was in the very thick of the struggle that hope was nurtured. His was the well-grounded hope of a valiant, veteran fighter. "We triumph even amid the sufferings which befall us, knowing that suffering produces constancy, and constancy confidence, and confidence hope, a hope that betrays not" (Rom. 5^{3-5}, Rutherford's rendering).

Hope, so interpreted,[1] is an essential feature of Paul's experience as a Christian. It is the secret of his invincible courage in face of life's difficulties and dangers; of the ringing note of joy in his utterances; of his triumphant outlook upon life; of his "great expectancy"; of "his face radiant with the sunrise he intently watches."[2]

Hope is one of Paul's trinity of graces. It is indissolubly linked with faith—faith in the God and Father of the Lord Jesus Christ—and with love,

[1] Optimism about the future of humanity, based on increasing comfort due to an increasing conquest of nature, or on automatic progress supposed to be warranted by the story of the evolutionary process, is not the optimism of Paul.

[2] Sir J. R. Seeley with reference to Milton, *Lectures and Essays*, p. 122.

the thing of supreme worth in human life. So what for him gives hope its strength and reality is set forth in those closing verses of the eighth chapter of the epistle to the Romans, in which we have one of the most inspiring and heartening expressions of an optimistic outlook upon human life to be found in the literature of the world. "We know that to them that love God all things work together for good, even to them . . . whom . . . he foreordained *to be conformed to the image of his Son.* . . . If God is for us, who can be against us? *He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not also with him freely give us all things? . . . Who shall separate us from the love of Christ?* shall tribulation, or anguish, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? . . . In all these things *we are more than conquerors through Him that loved us.* For I am persuaded that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers, nor height, nor depth, *nor any other creature shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord*" (Rom. 8^{28-39}).

CHAPTER XIV

THE NEW HUMANITY

Paul leaves his readers in no doubt about the emphasis which he lays upon the worth and responsibility of the individual. He finds the secret of a truly good life, not in mere conformity to the moral rules imposed or recognised by the society of which he is a member (or by God), but in the outflow of goodness from within, in the spirit by which the individual is inspired. So also in the religious sphere he finds the secret of a truly religious life, not in devotion to a system of religious observances imposed by God as Legislator and Judge, but in a close and trustful fellowship of the individual soul with God as Father, with the God and Father of the Lord Jesus Christ. Alike in the religious and in the ethical sphere he is persistent in magnifying the part which he expects the individual to play.

On the other hand he is equally persistent in magnifying the indispensableness, for the development of the life of the individual, of life in and for others. The self-centred independence of the virtuous Stoic cannot be his ideal of the good life: the love in which He finds what is of supreme worth in the good life inevitably draws the indi-

vidual into close and sympathetic contact with his fellows. Nor can the self-centred piety of the typical mystic be his ideal of the religious life: fellowship with God, not as the mere Infinite but as the God and Father of the Lord Jesus Christ, is impossible apart from the love which links the individual with the members of the family of the one Father.

With Paul's view of what gives its worth to the life of the individual—the inspiration of a love like that of Christ, and direct personal fellowship with God as this is revealed in the life of Christ—we can understand how, along with his insistence upon the worth and responsibility of the individual, he should be no less insistent upon the individual living in and for others. Apart from what the individual receives from, and contributes to, the society of which he is a member, his individuality has simply no chance of a worthy development. The highest interests of the individual are inextricably involved in the interests of the society.[1] So Paul is fond of making use of the illustration from the human body and its members which was current in the popular teaching of the Stoics. "For even as we have many members in one body, and all the members have not the same office: so we, who are many, are one body in Christ, and severally members one of

[1] "The more men individually acquire universal views and adopt universal ends, the stronger and the more significant is their individuality."—Sir Henry Jones, *A Faith that Enquires*, p. 295.

another" (Rom. $12^{4,5}$, *cf.* 1 Cor. 12^{12-27}). As there can be no body without its individual members, so there can be no worthy society without worthy individuals; and, on the other hand, as an individual member of the body has no significance apart from its connection with the whole body, so the individual Christian loses the significance of his individuality in so far as he withdraws himself from social sympathy and service, and retires into the solitude and poverty of a self-centred individuality. When man's true good is found in what Paul reckons the things of highest worth, the true good of the individual and the true good of the society are not opposed to each other, they constitute one common interest. So little can Paul be held responsible for a one-sided individualism in the interpretation of Christianity.

Jesus lays stress upon the individual in his relation to goodness and to God. He deals with individuals in the sanctuary of their own souls, but He meets them there that He may lead them out into the spacious life of a brotherhood. His unique fellowship with God is reflected in His unique vision of the Kingdom of God—a Kingdom of God which is universal as the love of God and as the heart and conscience of humanity, and of which Jesus Himself is the Leader.[1]

The phrase "the Kingdom of God" is found

[1] See *The Christ of Faith and the Jesus of History*, chap. iii.

far less frequently in the epistles of Paul than in the apostolic reminiscences of the teaching of Jesus. It does occur; sometimes with reference to the Kingdom as something still to come: "Flesh and blood cannot inherit the Kingdom of God" (1 Cor. 15^{50}); sometimes with reference to the Kingdom as something that is realised here and now: "The Kingdom of God is not in word, but in power" (1 Cor. 4^{20}); "The Kingdom of God is not eating and drinking, but righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Spirit" (Rom. 14^{17}). But Paul makes comparatively little use of this phrase. That, however, does not mean that what the phrase connotes has little place in his spiritual outlook. This particular phrase was familiar to the Jews of Paul's time as the expression of their ideal of the coming better day for their nation, on which their hope was set. But the phrase had no such associations for the Gentiles as for the Jews, and, if used in a Gentile environment, might readily enough have led to serious misunderstandings, and excited unnecessarily the suspicions of the representatives of the imperial government. Paul may have been influenced by considerations such as these; but whatever may have been his reasons, he made little use of the phrase "the Kingdom of God."

Paul, however, had his own way of expressing what Jesus meant by the Kingdom of God. He makes use of forms of thought which have little parallel in the sayings of Jesus, but it is Jesus' vision of the

Kingdom of God he is trying to interpret in the way most likely to make its appeal to Gentile Christians.

He draws a parallel between Adam and Christ (Rom. 5^{12-21}, 1 Cor. 15^{45-49}). Adam is the type (or representative or head) of humanity on its lower side—humanity weighed down by the flesh; the slave of sin; the prey of death; with eternal ruin, ἀπώλεια, as its destiny. Christ is the type (or representative or head) of humanity on its nobler side—humanity laid hold of by the grace of God; inspired by the life-giving spirit of God; set free by the presence and power of the spirit of God from the bondage of the flesh; lifted out of the lower life into that higher life of the spirit which is by its very nature eternal life. To put the parallel more shortly, Adam is the type of humanity in which flesh, sin, and death "reign"; while Christ is the type of humanity in which spirit, righteousness, and life "reign."

Paul does not mean that before the advent of Christ there was no higher life of the spirit to be found amongst men. He knows what a wealth of religious and ethical life was manifested in the long history of his own people, and he recognises that among the Gentiles there is to be found something else than the lower life of which he takes Adam to be the type. It is in another direction we are to look for the meaning of the parallel between Adam and Christ. What Paul is here aiming at is to emphasise the fact that with Christ there is a new

starting-point in the whole history of the human race. The coming of Christ means a New Humanity, in which the lower life of which Adam is the type is to be ever losing ground, and in which the higher life of which Christ is the type is to be ever gaining ground.[1]

Paul's conception of the New Humanity deserves far more attention than it has often received. It has a direct and fruitful bearing upon social, national, and international problems which are burdening the mind and the heart of the modern world.

Of this New Humanity Christ is the Head. Christ is a teacher, but He is more; He is an example, but He is more. He is even more than the redeemer of the individual. He is the inaugurator and leader of a New Humanity. Without membership in the New Humanity the individual lacks one of the indispensable features of Christian discipleship.[2] Loyalty to Christ carries with it loyalty to the New Humanity of which He is the Head.

[1] Too often interest in the parallel between Adam and Christ has been concentrated on Paul's incidental reference to the Fall of Adam. Here he seems to have adopted views which were current in the later Judaism, and suggested by the story in the third chapter of Genesis (*cf.* The Wisdom of Solomon $2^{23, 24}$, 4; 2 Esdras $3^{7, 21}$). But it was not with any particular theory about the problem of the origin of sin he was concerned in the fifth chapter of Romans, but about the inauguration of the New Humanity through Christ, and the worth of his teaching about this is not dependent on any theory about Adam and Adam's Fall.

[2] In this sense there is justification for the saying, *Extra ecclesiam nulla salus.*

The characteristic features of the New Humanity are revealed in the life Jesus lived as a man amongst men: what Jesus was is the ideal of manhood for those who acknowledge Him as Lord: He is the exemplar of the new life. Membership in the New Humanity means a continual struggle to be conformed to the likeness of its Head.

The bond which unites the members to one another is the new life which each shares. A life like that of Jesus, a life in which the chief good is sought in what He regarded as the things of highest worth and whose inspiration is a love like His, cannot but draw those who share in it into a close fellowship of sympathy and service. In Paul's phraseology, the bond of union is the spirit of Christ present and at work in the heart of every one who acknowledges Christ as Head. "We, who are many, are one body in Christ, and severally members one of another" (Rom. 12^5). "In one Spirit were we all baptized into one body . . . were all made to drink of one Spirit" (1 Cor. 12^{13}). "There are diversities of gifts, but the same Spirit" (1 Cor. 12^4).

The New Humanity is wide as the human race. In Christ "there cannot be Greek and Jew, circumcision and uncircumcision, barbarian, Scythian, bondman, freeman" (Col. 3^{11}). The things with which Jesus was concerned are above the differences which separate race from race, nation from nation, class from class; they are things which belong to man as man. There was a period in the history of

Israel when the best minds had a more or less clear vision of a possible universalism in their religion. In proportion as the prophets minimised the importance of the ritual side of religion and put the stress upon righteousness and mercy, they could look forward with confidence to a happier day when the forbidding walls which separated their people from the Gentiles would disappear. "And it shall come to pass in the latter days, that the mountain of the Lord's house shall be established in the top of the mountains, and shall be exalted above the hills; and all nations shall flow into it. And many peoples shall go and say, Come ye, and let us go up to the mountain of the Lord, to the house of the God of Jacob; and He will teach us of his ways, and we will walk in His paths: for out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem. And He shall judge between the nations, and shall reprove many peoples: and they shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruning-hooks: nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more" (Isaiah 2^{2-4}). To repeat words of Kuenen already quoted: "Was not the religion of Israel on the very point of spreading its wings to pass beyond the boundaries of Jewish nationality?"[1] But the generous visions of the great prophets of Israel became more or less dim in the atmosphere of the legalism of later Judaism. Visions of universal-

[1] Kuenen, *Hibbert Lectures*, p. 166.

ism were still cherished, but too often of a universal dominance of the Jews and the Jewish Law, won by the exercise of force, human or divine. Jewish writers who cherished such visions were right in believing that by nothing short of force could the universal dominance of the Jewish faith ever be won. Jews of a finer spirit may have believed in the triumph of the Jewish faith by winning a universal response to its appeal. Paul's knowledge of the Gentile world may have led him, while he was still a Pharisee, to doubt whether the Jewish religion, committed to the maintenance of the Jewish Law, would ever make that universal appeal of which he, too, had his dreams. But through Jesus, who made little of the peculiarities of the Jewish Law and concentrated attention upon a good life inspired by a great love and upon filial fellowship with the Father in heaven "who maketh His sun to rise on the evil and the good," he found the way opened up for a nobler universalism than had been dreamed of by the rabbis of his day, or even by the great prophets of Israel. The vision of a New Humanity kindled for him by Jesus laid its power upon him. With this vision glowing in his heart he could not but be impatient with the Jewish Law as a fatal obstacle in the way of the New Humanity, and he could not but express his impatience in trenchant language.

In addition to the tendencies towards universalism which we find in the prophets of Israel and, in a less

worthy form, in the later Judaism, it is fitting to refer to the conception of the unity of humanity which was a notable feature of the teaching of the Stoics.[1] They spoke of a "civitas communis deorum et hominum"; of "a city on high," even of "a city of God." "'Dear city of Cecrops,' saith the poet: and wilt thou not say, 'Dear city of God'?"[2] The unity of this ideal commonwealth of humanity was mainly grounded on the possession by each human being—freeman or slave, cultured Greek or rude barbarian—of a share in the one common reason (logos). This conception of the unity of humanity influenced the life of the Græco-Roman world in many beneficent ways. There can be little doubt that Paul was not only familiar with it, but also appreciated its worth. It is an echo of Stoic phraseology we seem to hear in such a saying as this: "Our citizenship (or commonwealth) is in heaven" (Phil. 3^{20}). The Stoic conception prepared many of Paul's Gentile readers in his own and subsequent times for a sympathetic understanding of what he had to say about the New Humanity of which Christ was the Head. But it was not to the Stoics he was indebted for his conception of the New Humanity. It was through Christ it came to him. His was a nobler vision than any Stoic had ever cherished. The Stoics found their type of

[1] The well-known line of Terence is an echo of Stoic teaching: "Homo sum, et nihil humani a me alienum puto."

[2] Marcus Aurelius, iv. 23.

humanity in their ideal "wise man"; Paul found his in Jesus Christ—a grander ideal than the "wise man" of the Stoics, and an ideal which was more than a mere ideal; it was an ideal which had been actually lived out. For the Stoics the bond of unity was the possession of a common reason; for Paul it was the spirit of Christ, the spirit of love—the spirit of love actually operative in the Christian Society. "The city of God, of which the Stoics doubtfully and feebly spoke, was now set up before the eyes of men. It was no insubstantial city, such as we fancy in the clouds, no invisible pattern such as Plato thought might be laid up in heaven, but a visible corporation whose members met together to eat bread and drink wine, and into which they were initiated by bodily immersion in water. Here the Gentile met the Jew whom he had been accustomed to regard as the enemy of the human race; the Roman met the lying Greek sophist, the Syrian slave the gladiator born beside the Danube. In brotherhood they met, the natural birth and kindred of each forgotten, the baptism alone remembered in which they had been born again to God and to each other." [1]

The New Humanity as conceived by Paul was universal in the sense of including the whole human race, but it was universal in the further sense of

[1] *Ecce Homo*, 6th ed., p. 136. *Cf.* P. Wendland: "The love, in whose praise Paul sings his hymn (1 Cor. xiii.), has drawn out more effective forces than the philosophical conception of humanity."—*Die Hellenistisch-Römische Kultur*, p. 233, 3rd ed.

taking into account the whole round of human life. His vision is not merely a vision of a universal commonwealth, but of a New Humanity in which every human interest is to have its place, while gaining a new significance. The grand sweep of his vision is implicit in his conviction that Christ, the Head of the New Humanity, is the divine meaning of the whole created universe; it is implicit in his great saying: "All things are yours." He had, it is true, his own particular interests—his limited interests, for no individual can be specially interested in everything which is of worth to humanity. But he leaves room for beauty and truth as well as for goodness; he leaves room for individual and social activities through which all the higher values in human life are realised and expressed. So wide is the possible range of the conception of the New Humanity.

There is still another feature of the New Humanity which may be referred to. Paul, as a Pharisee, had been familiar with the idea that in all the long history of his people God had been working out His own great purpose with them, and would be faithful to His purpose in the future. That idea belonged to the Jewish philosophy of history. Through Jesus Paul's philosophy of history underwent a transformation. Jesus, as the Head of a New Humanity, was the divine goal towards which the whole history of the people of Israel had been leading up, and a fresh starting-point for the history

both of Jews and Gentiles.[1] "When the fulness of the time came, God sent forth His Son" (Gal. 4^4), to be the inaugurator of a new era in the history of the human race. Very striking is the way in which Paul gives expression to this thought in the fifteenth chapter of First Corinthians: "The first man Adam became a living soul. The last Adam became a life-giving spirit. That is not first which is spiritual, but that which is natural; then that which is spiritual" (1 Cor. $15^{45, 46}$).[2] The history of humanity is represented as a process of development towards the end God had in view from the beginning—the New Humanity of which Christ is the Head. This was God's purpose in the past, it is the purpose He is still working out, and will continue to work out, with all nations and races, with Jew and Gentile, with Greek and barbarian.[3]

In this conviction of the New Humanity as the goal towards which the divine purpose is working Paul finds inspiration for life's tasks and struggles. Whatever is done in the spirit of Christ is co-opera-

[1] Referring to the name, "the third race," which in times later than Paul's was applied to the Christians, Harnack says: "The Christian people is not to Paul a third race beside the two others (Jews and Gentiles); it is the new stage in the history of humanity." —*Ausbreitung des Christenthums*, p. 179, 1st ed.

[2] Here the story of Adam's Fall does not seem to be taken into account.

[3] "In Greek authors of classical times there is no trace of the thought that the human race as a whole or any single people is advancing towards a divinely appointed goal."—S. H. Butcher, *Some Aspects of the Greek Genius*, p. 162.

tion with God in carrying out His purpose with the children of men. So He appeals to the Colossians: "Whatsoever ye do in word or in deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus" (Col. 3^{17})—Jesus the Head of the New Humanity. So He appeals to slaves to find a new meaning in irksome tasks: "Whatsoever ye do, work heartily, as unto the Lord, and not unto men. . . . Ye serve the Lord Christ" (Col. $3^{23, 24}$).

How did Paul picture to himself the future history of the New Humanity? To answer this question it is necessary to have regard to his views about the last things, to what theologians speak of as his eschatology.

It has been suggested that Paul was chiefly concerned, not with life here and now, but with something that was to happen in the future; in the immediate future, if not indeed in his own lifetime. Not only the early Christians but the Jews in general believed that the present world-order was to be soon succeeded by a new and better world-order, that the "present age" was to be succeeded by the "age to come." But Paul, in common with other Christians, believed that with the advent of Jesus into the world the "age to come" had already come. About that he could be in no manner of doubt. He had personal experience of the blessings of the new age which had dawned for the world through Jesus. It was in these blessings—reconciliation and fellowship with God, the victory of

the spirit over the flesh, and the resulting peace and hope and joy—he was supremely interested. These blessings he regarded, indeed, as the earnest of something greater yet to be. But nowhere does he hint that he thought of this something greater yet to be as intrinsically different from what he experienced here and now. On the contrary, he is continually insisting that what the future will bring is but the full fruition of the Christ-life which is experienced here and now. To suggest that his interest in the spirit of life in Christ Jesus, in the supremacy of love, in the New Humanity of which Christ is the Head, is rooted in the hope of attaining in the future world-order some other kind of good—an unknown and unknowable good—is to make a travesty of his whole life and teaching.

In considering Paul's outlook upon the future course of the New Humanity we take, then, as the starting-point his conviction that the new age has already come for him in Christ; or rather let us say, his experience of the new age. When he looked forward to the future he was convinced of these two things: (1) that the New Humanity would be victorious over all that was fighting against it, and (2) that its complete development lay beyond the bounds of this present life. But the particular form in which he held these convictions was affected by the apocalyptic imagery of the Jews, in whose atmosphere both he and the other early Christians had been reared. Sayings of Jesus, in which He

made use of this imagery, seem to have been interpreted, as were other sayings of His, in too literal a fashion [1] in the early Christian community: so strong was its hold upon them of the popular apocalyptic imagery. The coming of the Kingdom of God with power, of which Jesus had spoken, they could only picture to themselves by means of the imagery with which they were familiar in descriptions of what was to happen when Messiah appeared. As Jews, they had never dreamed of Messiah coming into the world as Jesus came, living the kind of life He lived, and dying the death He died upon the Cross. Their apocalyptic imagery was quite out of touch with such a Messiah. It was therefore not unnatural that, wedded as they were to this imagery, they should have used it to picture the coming of the Kingdom of God with power. Here Paul was in agreement with his fellow-Christians. He believed that with the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus the Kingdom of God had already come, that the New Humanity had already been inaugurated, but in picturing its future development he makes use of the Jewish apocalyptic imagery. That is evident to every reader of his epistles; so evident, that attention is distracted from his essential teaching about the New Humanity. Almost to the end,

[1] It is difficult not to believe that the editors of the reminiscences of what Jesus said and did allowed their report of the sayings of Jesus about the last things to be coloured in some measure by their own conceptions.

he believed that in his own lifetime Christ would come again into the world in some such fashion as that in which the Jews were wont to picture the advent of Messiah. That expectation, we know, was not fulfilled, nor was a similar expectation cherished by Christians after Paul's day. The disappointment of that expectation would have had disastrous consequences for the Christian Society, if, as is sometimes alleged, they had been chiefly concerned, not with the New Humanity possible here and now, but with a new world-order to be inaugurated by some stupendous intervention of God. Paul himself, by laying so strong an emphasis upon the New Humanity which could be so far realised here and now, prepared the Christian Society to meet the disappointment of their expectation in its Jewish form. And a still further and striking contribution to such preparation was made by the author of the Fourth Gospel, with whom Jewish eschatology falls almost completely into the background.

Paul's outlook upon the future history of the New Humanity has abiding worth, but its interest lies elsewhere than in what it has in common with Jewish eschatology. The course of the world has been very different from what he expected it to be. Believing, as he did, in the imminence of the Parousia of Christ, he was not contemplating the part which the Christian Society in its relation to the New Humanity was to play in the subsequent

centuries of the world's history. We have therefore no detailed programme for its guidance in a situation widely different from that which he had before him. But what we do have is immensely helpful —his vision of the New Humanity, and his ideal of the Christian Society. The New Humanity, as he conceives it, is wider than the Christian Society, and makes great demands upon the Christian Society. The Christian Society is, at least in its ideal, the New Humanity so far realised, but it does not exist for itself, it is charged with responsibility for furthering the wide interests of the New Humanity. Here we have from Paul a guiding light of which the Christian Church was never more in need than in our own days.

In our modern civilisation, as in the civilisation of every age, there is a never-ending conflict between two sets of forces, between the forces which belong to the higher side of human nature and the forces which belong to its lower side. The better forces are at work. Everywhere there are men and women who are chiefly concerned about life's higher values, who live as if they believed that it is possible to gain the whole world and to lose their own soul. They are not content to gain their individual good; it is their ambition to make their contribution to the common good, to find indeed in the common good their own highest individual good. In the sphere of communal and national life their activity is inspired, not by the hope of furthering their narrow personal interests through the community or nation,

but by generous devotion to the common weal. When they have to consider how their own nation should bear itself in its attitude to other nations, their first question is not: How can the material prosperity and power of my nation be increased? but rather this: How can the influence of my nation be best used for the common good of humanity? In these and countless other directions the better forces are at work. Here the influence of Christianity has been directly or indirectly a vital factor. Other factors have to be taken into account, but may we not say that whatever is done in pursuit of the things of highest worth and in devotion to the common good belongs to the New Humanity, of which Christ is the Head?

There is another side to the picture. The interests of the New Humanity are being continually imperilled by the forces of the old humanity of which Adam is the head; to use the expressive old phrase, imperilled by the *old Adam*, which is not quite dead in the best of men. This is what troubles our modern civilisation and makes our social, national, and international problems so acute. So far as individuals and classes and nations set more store by the things of lower worth than by the higher values, so far as they think more of a narrow individual good, a narrow class good or a narrow national good than of the common good, just so far will our perplexing problems remain insoluble. No mere readjustment of the organisation, desirable as it

may be in itself, will avail; the old problem would emerge in a new form. The only sure solution is to "whip the offending Adam" out of the human heart.[1]

Now it is significant that blame has been thrown on the Christian Church for having done so little in whipping out the offending Adam, as not to have made impossible the greatest tragedy in the history of our civilisation; and it is significant that to-day many wistful eyes are looking to the Christian Church for help in solving difficult social and international problems.

This is a call to the Christian Church to intensify its vision of the New Humanity, and to realise its responsibility for furthering the interests of the New Humanity. It dare not, at its peril, decline to respond to the call. The Church cannot indeed put into the background its mission to draw individual souls to God, and through common worship and Christian fellowship to nourish and strengthen their personal communion with God. But personal communion with God, not as the mere Infinite but as God revealed in Christ, involves co-operation with God in carrying out His great purpose with

[1] "I do not put my faith in any new institution, but in the individuals all over the world who think clearly, feel nobly, and act rightly, thus becoming the channels of moral truth. Our moral ideals do not work with hammers and chisels. Like trees, they spread their roots in the soil and their branches in the sky, without consulting any architects for their plans."—Rabindranath Tagore, *Creative Unity*, p. 153.

the family of mankind; it involves devotion to the New Humanity of which Christ is the Head. A self-centred piety is not Christian piety; it is certainly not Pauline piety. As little is that piety truly Christian, which is so engrossed with the future world as to be somewhat indifferent to what is going on and to what is needing to be done in the present world.[1] Paul believes, and believes intensely, in a future world and in the gravity of the eternal issues, for good or ill, of our life in the present world, but his vision of the New Humanity demands a piety which refuses to be content to let the present world go its own evil way.

How can the Christian Church best discharge its responsibility for furthering the wide interests of that New Humanity, the vision of which belongs to the very reason of its existence, and which it cannot allow to become dim without disloyalty to its divine mission? As we have already indicated, most of the trouble in our social, national, and international problems is due to the strength of the hold of the old Adam upon the human heart. "Now the works of the old Adam are manifest, which are these": the ignoring of life's higher values, concentration upon "the abundance of the things

[1] This "other-worldliness" has been thus described: "The Bible is the book of heaven and hell, the book which teaches the littleness of this life and the greatness of the life to come. Other books are secular; they tell us about the visible world and our temporal life; the Bible tells us of the other world and of an eternal life."—Sir J. R. Seeley, *Natural Religion*, p. 170.

which a man possesseth," thirst for superiority to others in amassing money and in securing social position and power, postponement of the common good to the selfish interests of individuals or classes or nations; and, in the wake of all that, an ugly troop of evil passions—pride, scorn, jealousy, envy, hatred, and all the rest. The old Adam is to be whipped out of the human heart, neither by physical force nor by a mere readjustment of organisation, but by the spirit of the New Humanity, which is the spirit of Christ. As Paul says, "Walk by the spirit, and ye shall not fulfil the lust of the flesh" (Gal. 5^{16}). Walking by the spirit means concentration on the things of highest worth. It means unselfish devotion to the common good. It means heroic love, readiness to face personal loss and suffering for the sake of others, for it means fellowship with Christ in the love which nerved Him to go forward to the Cross. And it means love in the common pathway of daily duty: the "love which suffereth long and is kind, love which envieth not, . . . seeketh not its own, is not provoked, taketh not account of evil, . . . believeth all things, hopeth all things, endureth all things."

By its emphasis on the new life of the spirit the Christian Church has all through the ages rendered signal service to the interests of the New Humanity. There is a loud call to the Church to-day to increase this service by renewed zeal in inspiring all who come under its influence with the spirit of the New

Humanity. So far as this spirit gains sway over the lives of individual men and women, thus far will there be a slackening of the hold of the old Adam; thus far will our industrial and other problems be easier of solution; thus far will there be a reinforcement of the efforts of countless noble-hearted men and women who are not only dreaming of a better world-order, but are struggling bravely against the powers of darkness in high places and in low to bring it into being.

Such concentration on the wide interests of the New Humanity would react in fruitful ways upon the life of the Church. It would furnish a fresh motive to strive after a fuller measure of the spirit of the New Humanity in its own fellowship and organisation. It might mean less engrossment with some theological and ecclesiastical topics, but it would tend to win the sympathy and co-operation of many men and women who have been drifting away from organised Christianity, but who are loyal to the interests of the New Humanity and to the leadership of Jesus, the Head of the New Humanity. And it would work for the closer union of all who acknowledge the one Lord. If all branches of the Church became more intent upon realising in the wide world and in the whole sphere of human life Paul's vision of the New Humanity, the increased sense of comradeship in discharging a common and momentous task would produce an atmosphere in which some at least of the evils for which

ecclesiastical rivalry and strife are responsible could no longer exist.

Paul, as we have already noted, seldom speaks of the Kingdom of God, but the spiritual reality which that phrase connotes has a commanding place in his understanding of the good that has come to himself and to the world through Jesus. The fact that he makes so little use of the phrase familiar to the Jews and to Jesus may be taken as evidence of his eagerness to pass beyond the mere phrase, and get to the heart of what Jesus meant by it, and thereby to help the Gentiles to realise the character and grandeur of that Kingdom of God about which Jesus had so much to say. Paul is not introducing a new conception—a conception of his own; he is interpreting in his own way what he has learned in the school of Jesus. It was Jesus who kindled for him his vision of the New Humanity.

The pattern of manhood for the New Humanity is given to him by Jesus. Conformity to the likeness of Jesus is what he seeks for himself and for his readers. What Jesus was, the life He lived with His Father in heaven, the life He lived among His fellows, His teaching about God and goodness, the love which inspired what He did, what He suffered, and the death He died upon the Cross—without that Paul could not have come by his conception of what the men and women were to be who were to belong to the New Humanity. The worth of the

New Humanity was determined by the worth of the manhood of Christ its Head.[1]

As Jesus knew Himself to be the Leader of the Kingdom of God, so for Paul Jesus is no mere teacher, no mere example of a truly good life, He is the Head of the New Humanity, and not merely in the sense of being its inaugurator, but in the sense of being the life-giving spirit in whom is its life and power. As Jesus demanded a heroic, uncalculating loyalty from those who would be His followers, so Paul contemplates such an unreserved loyalty to the Head of the New Humanity that he speaks of Christ so dwelling in and controlling the Christian by His spirit that he could say of himself, as he would have said of others: "I live, and yet no longer I, but Christ liveth in me" (Gal. 2^{20}).

Paul's universalism, too, goes back to Jesus. The Kingdom of God, as interpreted by Jesus, is wide as the whole family of God's children. In His conception of the good life and of the Fatherhood of God and the sonship of man, there is nothing

[1] "How can we love a creature so degraded (as man), full of vile wants and contemptible passions, whose little life is most harmlessly spent when it is an empty round of eating and drinking; a creature destined for the grave and for oblivion when his allotted term of fretfulness and folly has expired? Of this race Christ Himself was a member, and to this day is it not the best answer to all blasphemers of the species, the best consolation when our sense of its degradation is keenest, that a human brain was behind his forehead and a human heart beating in his breast, and that within the whole creation of God nothing more elevated or more attractive has yet been found than he?"—*Ecce Homo*, p. 164.

particularistic. And the Kingdom of God is wide as the whole sphere of human interests. In every vocation, in every duty, in every struggle there is a part to be played by the spirit of Christ, by trustful fellowship with God and by loving service to His children.

Paul's conception of the New Humanity, which has behind it the authority of Jesus, is charged with heartening and inspiration; it "brightens up the battle" for us. The New Humanity, to whose service we are called up, is the goal of the divine purpose which God has been and is ever working out for the children of men. Its worth is to be measured by the manhood of Christ. In companionship with its Leader every member has an immense reinforcement of his energies. There is companionship with the Leader, and there is comradeship with all, a multitude which no man can number, who are fighting on the side of the New Humanity against the old humanity of which Adam is the head. Our sphere may be narrow or wide, obscure or conspicuous, but as far as what we do or what we suffer or what we aspire to has behind it the spirit of Christ, so far are we servants of the New Humanity, helpers of men and fellow-workers with God. And as far as we are assured of this, so far are we delivered from gnawing doubt as to the worth-whileness of human life and individual effort, so far can we face life with the faith and hope and courage of those who "know that their labour is not in vain in the Lord" (1 Cor. 15^{58}).

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